









WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS,

WITH

LIVES OF THE AUTHORS.

EDITED BY

ROBERT WALSH, JR.

VOL. XLVI.

CARY.

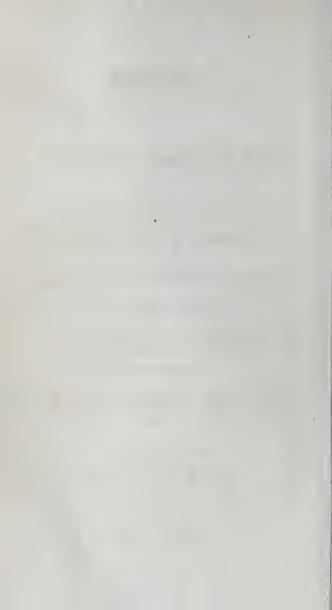
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THE

VISION;

OR

MELL, PURGATORY, AND PARADISE,

0F

DANTE ALIGHIERI.

TRANSLATED BY

THE REV. HENRY FRANCIS CARY, A. M.

PURGATORY.

CANTO XIV.

ARGUMENT.

Our Poet on this second cornice finds also the souls of Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna; the latter of whom, hearing that he comes from the banks of the Arno, inveighs against the degeneracy of all those who dwell in the cities visited by that stream; and the former, in like manner, against the inhabitants of Romagna. On leaving these, our Poets hear voices recording noted instances of ency.

"SAY,* who is he around our mountain winds, Or ever death has prun'd his wing for flight; That opes his eyes, and covers them at will?"

"I know not who he is, but know thus much; He comes not singly. Do thou ask of him, For thou art nearer to him; and take heed, Accost him gently, so that he may speak."

Thus on the right two spirits, bending each
Toward the other, talk'd of me; then both
Addressing me, their faces backward lean'd,
And thus the one† began: "O soul, who yet
Pent in the body, tendest towards the sky!
For charity, we pray thee, comfort us;
Recounting whence thou com'st, and who thou
art:

^{*} Say.] The two spirits who thus speak to each other are, Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna.

[†] The one.] Guido del Duca.

For thou dost make us, at the favour shown thee, Marvel, as at a thing that ne'er hath been."

"There stretches through the midst of Tuscany," I straight began, "a brooklet,* whose well-head Springs up in Falterona; with his race Not satisfied, when he some hundred miles 20 Hath measur'd. From his banks bring I this frame. To tell you who I am were words mis-spent: For yet my name scarce sounds on rumour's lip."

"If well I do incorp'rate with my thought The meaning of thy speech," said he, who first Addrest me, "thou dost speak of Arno's wave."

To whom the other: "Why hath he conceal'd
The title of that river, as a man
Doth of some horrible thing?" The spirit, who
Thereof was question'd, did acquit him thus: 30.
"I know not: but 'tis fitting well the name
Should perish of that vale; for from the source, the whore teems so plenteously the Alpine steep
Maim'd of Pelorus, (that doth scarcely pass)
Beyond that limit, even to the point

Torn from Pelorus. Milton, P. L. b. i. 232.

^{*} A brooklet.] The Arno, that rises in Falterona, a mountain in the Appennine. Its course is a hundred and twenty miles, according to G. Villani, who traces it accurately.

⁺ The other.] Rinieri da Calboli.

[‡] From the source.] "From the rise of the Arno in that 'Alpine steep,' the Apennine, from whence Pelorus in Sicily was torn by a convulsion of the earth, even to the point where the same river unites its waters to the occan, Virtue is persecuted by all."

[§] Maim'd of Pelorus.] Virg. Æn. lib. iii. 414.

If That doth scarcely pass.] "Pelorus is in few places higher than Fallerona, where the Arno springs." Lombardi explains this differently, and, I think, erroneously.

Where unto ocean is restor'd what heaven
Drains from th' exhaustless store for all earth's
streams,

Throughout the space is virtue worried down,
As 'twere a snake, by all, for mortal foe;
Or through disastrous influence on the place,
Or else distortion of misguided wills
That custom goads to evil: whence in those,
The dwellers in that miserable vale,
Nature is so transform'd, it seems as they
Had shar'd of Circe's feeding. 'Midst brute swine'
Worthier of acorns than of other food
Created for man's use, he shapeth first
His obscure way; then, sloping onward, finds
Curs,† snarlers more in spite than pow'r, from
whom

He turns with scorn aside: still journeying down, By how much more the curst and luckless foss‡ Swells out to largeness, e'en so much it finds Dogs turning into wolves.§ Descending still Through yet more hollow eddies, next he meets A race of foxes, so replete with craft, They do not fear that skill can master it. Nor will I cease because my words are heard By other ears than thine. It shall be well For this man, ** if he keep in memory What from no erring spirit I reveal.

^{* &#}x27;Midst brute swine.] The people of Casentino.

[†] Curs.] The Arno leaves Arezzo about four miles to the left.

[†] Foss.] So in his anger he terms the Arno.

Molves.] The Florentines.

[|] Foxes.] The Pisans.

My words are heard.] It should be recollected that Guido still addresses himself to Rinieri.

^{**} For this man.] "For Dante, who has told us that he comes from the banks of Arno."

Lo! I behold thy grandson,* that becomes
A hunter of those wolves, upon the shore
Of the fierce stream; and cows them all with dread.
Their flesh, yet living, sets he up to sale,
Then, like an aged beast, to slaughter dooms.
Many of life he reaves, himself of worth
And goodly estimation. Smear'd with gore,
Mark how he issues from the rueful wood;
Leaving such havoc, that in thousand years
It spreads not to prime lustihood again."

As one, who tidings hears of woe to come, Changes his looks perturb'd, from whate'er part The peril grasp him; so beheld I change That spirit, who had turn'd to listen; struck With sadness, soon as he had caught the word.

His visage, and the other's speech, did raise Desire in me to know the names of both; Whereof, with meek entreaty, I inquir'd.

The shade, who late addrest me, thus resum'd:
"Thy wish imports, that I vouchsafe to do 80
For thy sake what thou wilt not do† for mine.
But, since God's will is that so largely shine
His grace in thee, I will be liberal too.
Guido of Duca know then that I am.
Envy so parch'd my blood, that had I seen
A fellow man made joyous, thou hadst mark'd
A livid paleness overspread my cheek.
Such harvest reap I of the seed I sow'd. [need
O man! why place‡ thy heart where there doth

^{*} Thy grandson.] Fulcieri da Calboli, grandson of Rinieri da Calboli, who is here spoken of. The atrocities predicted came to pass in 1302. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. 59,

[†] What thou wilt not do.] Dante having declined telling him his name. See v. 22.

Why place.] This will be explained in the ensuing Canto.

Exclusion of participants in good?

This is Rinieri's spirit; this, the boast
And honour of the house of Calboli;
Where of his worth no heritage remains.

Nor his the only blood, that hath been stript,
('Twixt Po, the mount, the Reno, and the shore,)*
Of all that truth or fancy† asks for bliss:
But, in those limits, such a growth has sprung
Of rank and venom'd roots, as long would mock
Slow culture's toil. Where is good Lizio?‡ where.

Manardi, Traversaro, and Carpigna?

O bastard slips of old Romagna's line!

When in Bologna the low artisan,||

1:

Quando in Bologna un Fabro si ralligna. Quando in Faenza un Bernardin di Fosco.

The pointing and the marginal note of the Monte Casino MS, entirely change the sense of these two lines. There is a mark of interrogation added to each; and by way of answer to both there is written, "Quasi dicat numquam." Fabro is made a proper name, and it is said of him: "Iste fuit Dom. Faber de Lambertaciis de Bononia;" and Benvenuto da Imula calls him "Nobilis Miles." I have not ventured to alter the translation so as to make

^{* &#}x27;Twixt Po, the mount, the Reno, and the shore.] The boundaries of Romagna.

[†] Fancy.] "Trastullo." Quadrio, in the notes on the second of the Salmi Penitenziali of our author, understands this in a higher sense, as meaning that joy which results from an easy and constant practice of virtue. See Opere di Dante. Zatta ediz. tom. iv. part ii. p. 193. And he is followed by Lombardi.

[‡] Lizio.] Lizio da Valbona introduced into Boccaccio's Decameron, G. V. N. 4.

[§] Manardi, Traversaro, and Carpigna.] Arrigo Manardi of Faenza, or, as some say, of Brettinoro; Pier Traversaro, lord of Ravenna; and Guido di Carpigna of Montefeltro.

[|] In Bologna the law artison.] One who had been a mechanic, named Lambertaccio, arrived at almost supreme power in Bologna.

And in Faenza yon Bernardin* sprouts,
A gentle cyon from ignoble stem.
Wonder not, Tuscan, if thou see me weep,
When I recal to mind those once lov'd names,
Guido of Prata,† and of Azzo him‡
That dwelt with us; § Tignoso and his troop,
With Traversaro's house and Anastagio's,
(Each race disherited;) and beside these,
The ladies and the knights, the toils and ease,
'That witch'd us into love and courtesy;**

it accord with this interpretation, as it must have been done in the face, I believe, of nearly all the editions, and, as far as may be gathered from the silence of Lombardi, of the MSS. also which that commentator had consulted.

*Yon Bernardin.] Bernardin di Fosco, a man of low origin, but great talents, who governed at Faenza.

† Prata.] A place between Frenza and Ravenna.

† Of Azzo him.] Ugolino, of the Uhaldini family in Tuscany. § With us.] Lombardi claims the reading. "nosco," instead of vosco," "with us," instead of "with you," for his favoutite edition; but it is also in Landine's of 1488.

| Tignoso.] Federigo Tognoso of Rimini.

¶ Traversaro's house and Anastagio's.] Two noble families of Ravenna. See v. 100. She, to whom Dryden has given the name of Honoria, in the fable so admirably paraphrased from Boccaccio, was of the former; her lover and the spectre were

of the Anastagi family. See Canto xxviii. 20.

** Courtesy.] "Cortesia e onestade, &c." Convito, p. 65. "Courtesy and honour are all one; and because anciently virtue and good manners were usual in courts, as the contrary now is, this term was derived from thence: courtesy was as much as to say, custom of courts; which word, if it were now taken from courts, especially hose of Italy, would be no other than turpitude, "turpez za."

Courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tapstry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended,
Milton, Comus.

Where now such malice reigns in recreant hearts. O Brettinoro!* wherefore tarriest still, Since forth of thee thy family hath gone, And many, hating evil, join'd their steps! Well doeth he, that bids his lineage cease, Bagnacavallo;† Castracaro ill, And Conio worse,‡ who care to propagate A race of Counties§ from such blood as theirs. 120 Well shall ye also do, Pagani, then When from amongst you hies your demon child; Not so howe'er, that henceforth there remain True proof of what ye were. O Hugolin,**

* O Brettinoro.] A beautifully situated castle in Romagna, the hospitable residence of Guido del Duca, who is here speaking. Landino relates, that there were several of this family, who, when a stranger arrived amongst them, contended with one another by whom he should be entertained; and that in order to end this dispute, they set up a pillar with as many rings as there were fathers of families among them, a ring being assigned to each, and that accordingly as a stranger on his arrival hung his horse's hidle on one or other of these, he became his guest to whom the ring belonged.

+ Bagnacavallo.] A castle hetween Imola and Ravenna.

t - Castracaro ill

And Conio worse.] Both in Romagna.

§ Counties.] I have used this word here for "Counts," as it is in Shakspeare.

|| Pagani. The Pagani were lords of Faenza and Imola. One of them, Machinardo, was named the Demon, from his treachery. See Hell, canto xxvii. 47, and note.

¶ Not so howe'er.] "Yet your offspring will be stained with some vice, and will not afford true proof of the worth of your ancestors."

** Hu, olin.] Ugolino Ubaldini, a noble and virtuous person in Faenza, who, on account of his age probably, was not likely to leave any offspring behind him. He is enumerated among the poets by Crescimbeni, and by Tiraboschi, Mr. Mathias's editavol. i. p. 143.

Thou sprung of Fantolini's line! thy name
Is safe; since none is look'd for after thee
To cloud its lustre, warping from thy stock.
But, Tuscan! go thy ways; for now I take
Far more delight in weeping, than in words.
Such pity for your sakes hath wrung my heart." 130

We knew those gentle spirits, at parting, heard Our steps. Their silence therefore, of our way, Assur'd us. Soon as we had quitted them, Advancing onward, lo! a voice, that seem'd Like volley'd light'ning, when it rives the air, Met us, and shouted, "Whosoever finds Will slay me;"* then fled from us, as the bolt Lanc'd sudden from a downward-rushing cloud. When it had giv'n short truce unto our hearing, Behold the other with a crash as loud 140 As the quick-following thunder: "Mark in me Aglauros; turn'd to rock." I, at the sound Retreating, drew more closely to my guide.

Now in mute stillness rested all the air; And thus he spake: "There was the galling bit.‡ But your old enemy so baits his hook, He drags you eager to him. Hence nor curb Avails you, nor reclaiming call. Heav'n calls,§

^{* ---} Whosoever finds

Will slay me.] The words of Cain, Gen. iv. 14.

⁺ Aglauros.] Ovid. Met. lih. ii. fab. 12.

[†] There was the galling bit.] Referring to what had been before said, Canto xiii. 35. The commentators remark the unusual word "camo," which occurs here in the original; but they have not observed, I helieve, that Dante himself uses it in the De Monarchia, lib. iii. p. 155.

[§] Heav'n calls.] Venturi refers to an imitation of this by Petrarch:

Or ti solleva a più beata speme, Mirando il ciel, che ti si volve intorno.

And, round about you wheeling, courts your gaze
With everlasting beauties. Yet your eye 150
Turns with fond doting still upon the earth.
Therefore He smites you who discerneth all."

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ARGUMENT.

An angel invites them to ascend the next steep. On their way Dante suggests certain doubts, which are resolved by Virgil; and, when they reach the third cornice, where the sin of anger is purged, our Poet, in a kind of waking dream, heholds remarkable instances of patience; and soon after they are enveloped in a dense for.

As much* as 'twixt the third hour's close and dawn, Appeareth of heav'n's sphere, that ever whirls As restless as an infant in his play: So much appear'd remaining to the sun Of his slope journey tow'rds the western goal.

Evening was there, and here the noon of night; And full upon our forehead smote the beams. For round the mountain, circling, so our path Had led us, that toward the sun-set now Direct we journey'd; when I felt a weight 10 Of more exceeding splendour, than before, Press on my front. The cause unknown, amaze Possess'd me; and both hands against my brows Lifting, I interpos'd them, as a screen, That of its gorgeous superflux of light

^{*} As much.] It wanted three hours of sun-set.

Clips the diminist'd orb. As when the ray,
Striking on water or the surface clear
Of mirror, leaps unto the opposite part,
Ascending at a glance, e'en as it fell,
And is much differs from the stone, that falls 20
Through equal space, (so practic skill hath shown;)
Thus, with refracted light, before me seem'd
The ground there smitten; whence, in sudden haste.

My sight recoil'd. "What is this, sire belov'd! 'Gainst which I strive to shield the sight in vain?" Cried 1, "and which towards us moving seems?" " Marvel not, if the family of heav'n," He answer'd, "yet with dazzling radiance dim Thy sense. It is a messenger who comes, Inviting man's ascent. Such sights ere long, 30 Not grievous, shall impart to thee delight, As thy perception is by nature wrought Up to their pitch." The blessed angel, soon As we had reach'd him, hail'd us with glad voice: "Here enter on a ladder far less steep Than ve have yet encounter'd." We forthwith Ascending, heard behind us chanted sweet, "Blessed the merciful,"† and "Happy thou, That conquer'st." Lonely each, my guide and I, Pursued our upward way; and as we went, 40 Some profit from his words I hop'd to win, And thus of him inquiring, fram'd my speech :

^{*} And as much.] Lombardi, I think justly, observes that this does not refer to the length of time which a stone is in falling to the ground, but to the perpendicular line which it describes when falling, as contrasted with the angle of incidence formed by light reflected from water or from a mirror.

⁺ Blessed the merciful.] Matt. v. 7.

"What meant Romagna's spirit,* when he spake Ofbliss exclusive, with no partner shar'd?" [knows,

"He straight replied: "No wonder, since he What sorrow waits on his own worst defect, If he chide others, that they less may mourn. Because ye point your wishes at a mark, Where, by communion of possessors, part Is lessen'd, envy bloweth up men's sighs.

50 No fear of that might touch ye, if the love Of higher sphere exalted your desire.

For there, by how much more they call it our's, So much propriety of each in good Encreases more, and heighten'd charity Wraps that fair cloister in a brighter flame."

"Now lack I satisfaction more," said I, "Than if thou hadst been silent at the first; And doubt more gathers on my lab'ring thought. How can it chance, that good distributed, 60 The many, that possess it, makes more rich, Than if't were shar'd by few?" He answering thus: "Thy mind, reverting still to things of earth, Strikes darkness from true light. The highest good Unlimited, ineffable, doth so speed To love, as beam to lucid body darts, Giving as much of ardour as it finds. The sempiternal effluence streams abroad. Spreading, wherever charity extends. So that the more aspirants to that bliss 70 Are multiplied, more good is there to love, And more is lov'd; as mirrors, that reflect, Each unto other, propagated light. If these my words avail not to allay

^{*} Romagna's spirit.] Guido del Duca, of Brettinoro, whom we have seen in the preceding canto.

Thy thirsting, Beatrice thou shalt see,
Who of this want, and of all else thou hast,
Shall rid thee to the full. Provide but thou,*
That from thy temples may be soon eras'd,
E'en as the two already, those five scars, [heal." 80
That, when they pain thee worst, then kindliest

"Thou," I had said, "content'st me;" when I saw The other round was gain'd, and wond'ring eyes Did keep me mute. There suddenly I seem'd By an extatic vision wrapt away; And in a temple saw, methought, a crowd Of many persons; and at th' entrance stood A dame, + whose sweet demeanour did express A mother's love, who said, "Child! why hast thou Dealt with us thus? Behold thy sire and I [peace: 90 Sorrowing have sought thee;" and so held her And straight the vision fled. A female next Appear'd before me, down whose visage cours'd Those waters, that grief forces out from one By deep resentment stung, who seem'd to say: "If thou, Pisistratus, be lord indeed Over this city. + nam'd with such debate Of adverse gods, and whence each science sparkles, Avenge thee of those arms, whose bold embrace Hath clasp'd our daughter;" and to her, mescem'd, Benign and meek, with visage undisturb'd.

[•] Provide but thou.] "Take heed that thou be healed of the five remaining sins, as thou already art of the two, namely, pride and envy."

[†] A dame.] Luke, ii. 43.

[†] Over this city.] Athens, named after 'ASnyn, Minerva, in consequence of her having produced a more valuable gift for it in the clive, than Neptune had done in the horse.

Her sovran spake: "How shall we those requite*
Who wish us evil, if we thus condemn
The man that loves us?" After that I saw
A multitude, in fury burning, slay
With stones a stripling youth,† and shout amain
"Destroy, destroy;" and him I saw, who bow'd
Heavy with death unto the ground, yet made
His eyes, unfolded upward, gates to heav'n,
Praying forgiveness of th' Almighty Sire,
Amidst that cruel conflict, on his foes,

110
With looks that win compassion to their aim.

Soon as my spirit, from her airy flight Returning, sought again the things whose truth Depends not on her shaping, I observ'd She had not rov'd to falsehood in her dreams.

Meanwhile the leader, who might see I mov'd

As one who struggles to shake off his sleep,

Exclaim'd: "What ails thee, that thou canst not
hold

Thy footing firm; but more than half a league Hast travel'd with clos'd eyes and tott'ring gait, 120 Like to a man by wine or sleep o'ercharg'd?"

"Beloved father! so thou deign," said I,
"To listen, I will tell thee what appear'd
Before me, when so fail'd my sinking steps."

He thus: "Not if thy countenance were mask'd With hundred vizards, could a thought of thine, How small soe'er, elude me. What thou saw'st Was shown, that freely thou mightst ope thy heart

^{*} How shall we those requite.] The answer of Pisistratus the tyrant to his wife, when she urged him to inflict the punishment of death on a young man, who, inflamed with love for his daughter, had snatched a kiss from her in public. The story is told by Valerius Maximus, lib. v. 1.

[†] A stripling youth.] The protomartyr Stephen.

To the waters of peace, that flow diffus'd
From their eternal fountain. I not ask'd, 130
What ails thee? for such cause as he doth, who
Looks only with that eye, which sees no more,
When spiritless the body lies; but ask'd,
To give fresh vigour to thy foot. Such goads,
The slow and loit'ring need; that they be found
Not wanting, when their hour of watch returns."

So on we journey'd, through the evening sky Gazing intent, far onward as our eyes,
With level view, could stretch against the bright
Vespertine ray: and lo! by slow degrees 140
Gath'ring, a fog made tow'rds us, dark as night.
There was no room for 'scaping; and that mist
Bereft us, both of sight and the pure air.

CANTO XVI.

ARGUMENT.

As they proceed through the mist, they hear the voices of spirits praying. Marco Lombardo, one of these, points out to Dante the error of such as impute our actions to necessity; explains to him that man is endued with free-will; and shows that much of human depravity results from the undue mixture of spiritual and temporal authority in rulers.

Hell's dunnest gloom, or night unlustrous, dark, Of every planet 'reft, and pall'd in clouds, Did never spread before the sight a veil In thickness like that fog, nor to the sense So palpable and gross. Ent'ring its shade, Mine eye endur'd not with unclosed lids; Which marking, near me drew the faithful guide, Offering me his shoulder for a stay.

As the blind man behind his leader walks,
Lest he should err, or stumble unawares

On what might harm him or perhaps destroy;
I journey'd through that bitter air and foul,
Still listening to my escort's warning voice,
"Look that from me thou part not." Straight I

Voices, and each one seem'd to pray for peace, And for compassion, to the Lamb of God That taketh sins away. Their prelude still Was "Agnus Dei;" and through all the choir,
One voice, one measure ran, that perfect seem'd
The concord of their song. "Are these I hear 20
Spirits, O master?" I exclaim'd; and he,
"Thou aim'st aright: these loose the bonds of
wrath."

"Now who art thou, that through our smoke dost And speak'st of us, as thou* thyself e'en yet Dividedst time by calends?" So one voice Bespake me; whence my master said, "Reply; And ask, if upward hence the passage lead."

"O being! who dost make thee pure, to stand Beautiful once more in thy Maker's sight; Along with me; and thou shalt hear and wonder." 30 Thus I, whereto the spirit answering spake: "Long as 't is lawful for me, shall my steps Foilow on thine; and since the cloudy smoke Forbids the seeing, hearing in it's stead Shall keep us join'd." I then forthwith began : "Yet in my mortal swathing, I ascend To higher regions; and am hither come Thorough the fearful agony of hell. And, if so largely God bath dol'd his grace, That, clean peside all modern precedent, 40 He wills me to behold his kingly state; From me conceal not who thou wast, ere death Had loos'd thee; but instruct me: and instruct If rightly to the pass I tend; thy words The way directing, as a safe escort."

"I was of Lombardy, and Marco call'd:†

^{*} As thou.] " As if thou wert still living."

[†] I was of Lombardy, and Marco call'd. A Venetian gentleman. "Lombardo," both was his sirname and denoted the country to which he belonged. G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. 120, terms him a wise and worthy courtier."

Not inexperienc'd of the world, that worth I still affected, from which all have turn'd The nerveless bow aside. Thy course tends right Unto the summit:" and, replying thus, 50 He added, "I beseech thee pray for me, When thou shalt come aloft." And I to him: " Accept my faith for pledge I will perform What thou requirest. Yet one doubt remains; That wrings me sorely, if I solve it not. Singly before it urg'd me, doubled now By thine opinion, when I couple that With one elsewhere* declar'd; each strength'ning The world indeed is even so forlorn fother. Of all good, as thou speak'st it, and so swarms 60 With every evil. Yet, beseech thee, point The cause out to me, that myself may see, And unto others show it: for in heaven One places it, and one on earth below."

Then heaving forth a deep and audible sigh, "Brother!" he thus began, "the world is blind; And thou in truth com'st from it. Ye, who live, Do so each cause refer to heav'n above,

Benvenuto da Imola, says Laudino, relates of him, that being imprisoned, and not able to pay the price of his ransom, he applied by letter to his friend Riccardo da Camino, lord of Trevigi, for relief. Riccardo set on foot a contribution among several nobles of Lombardy for the purpose; of which, when Marco was informed, he wrote back with much indignation to Riccardo, that he had rather die than remain under obligations to so many benefactors. It is added that Riccardo then paid the whole out of his own purse. Of this generous man I have occasion to speak again in the notes to canto viii. 71, and to Par, canto ix. 48.

* Elsewhere.] He refers to what Guido del Duca had said in the fourteenth canto, concerning the degeneracy of his country-

men.

E'en as it's motion, of necessity, Drew with it all that moves. If this were so, 70 Free choice in you were none; nor justice would There should be joy for virtue, woe for ill. Your movements have their primal bent from heaven; Not all: yet said I all; what then ensues? Light have ve still to follow evil or good, And of the will free power, which, if it stand Firm and unwearied in Heaven's first assay, Conquers at last, so it be cherish'd well, Triumphant over all. To mightier force*, To better nature subject, ye abide 80 Free, not constrain'd by that which forms in you The reasoning mind uninfluenc'd of the stars. If then the present race of mankind err. Seek in yourselves the cause, and find it there. Herein thou shalt confess me no false spy.

"Forth from his plastic hand, who charm'd be-

Her image ere she yet exist, the soul Comes like a babe, that wantons sportively,†
Weeping and laughing in its wayward moods;
As artless, and as ignorant of aught, 90
Save that her Maker being one who dwells
With gladness ever, willingly she turns
To whate'er yields her joy. Of some slight good
The flavour soon she tastes; and, snar'd by that
With fondness she pursues it; if no guide

Animula vagula blandula, &c.

^{*} To mightier force.] "Though ye are subject to a higher power than that of the heavenly constellations, even to the power of the great Creator himself, yet ye are still left in the possession of liberty."

[†] Like a babe that wantons sportively.] This reminds us of the Emperor Hadrian's verses to his departing soul.

Recal, no rein direct her wand'ring course. Hence it behov'd, the law should be a curb; A sovereign hence behov'd, whose piercing view Might mark at least the fortress* and main tower Of the true city. Laws indeed there are: But who is he observes them? None; not he, Who goes before, the shepherd of the flock. Whot chews the cud but doth not cleave the hoof. Therefore the multitude, who see their guide Strike at the very good they covet most, Feed there and look no further. Thus the cause Is not corrupted nature in yourselves, But ill-conducting, that hath turn'd the world To evil. Rome, that turn'd it unto good, Was wont to boast two sunst, whose several beams 110

Cast light on either way, the world's and God's.
One since hath quench'd the other; and the sword

^{*} The fortress.] Justice, the most necessary virtue in the chief magistrate, as the commentators for the most part explain it: and it appears manifest from all our Poet says in his first book De Monarchia, concerning the authority of the temporal Monarch and concerning Justice, that they are right.

⁺ Who.] He compares the Pope, on account of the union of the temporal with the spiritual power in his person, to an unclean heast in the levitical law. "The camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean to you." Levit. xi. 4.

[†] Two suns.] The Emperor and the Bishop of Rome. There is something similar to this in the De Monarchia, lih. iii. p. 138. "They say first, according to that text in Genesis, that God made two great lights, the greater light and the lesser, the one to rule the day, and the other the night: then, as the moon, which is the lesser light, has no hrightness, except as she receives it from the sun, so neither has the temporal kingdom authority, except what it receives from the spiritual government." The fallacy of which reasoning (if such it can be called) he proceeds to prove.

Is grafted on the crook; and, so conjoin'd,
Each must perforce decline to worse, unaw'd
By fear of other. If thou doubt me, mark
The blade: each herb is judg'd of by its seed.
That land*, through which Adice and the Po
Their waters roll, was once the residence
Of courtesy and valour, ere the day†
That frown'd on Frederick; now secure may pass
Those limits, whosoe'er hath left, for shame,
To talk with good men, or come near their haunts.
Three aged ones are still found there, in whom
The old time‡ chides the new: these deem it long
Ere God restore them to a better world:
The good Gherardo§; of Palazzo he,

It is silly sooth, And dallies with the innocence of love, Like the old age.

Shakspeare, Twelfth Night, act ii. sc. 4.

§ The good Gherardo.] Gherardo di Camino, of Trevigi. He is honourably mentioned in our Poet's Convito, p. 173. "Let us suppose that Gherardo da Camino had been the grandson of the meanest hind that ever drank of the Sile or the Cagnano, and that his grandfather was not yet forgotten; who will dare to say that Gherardo da Camino was a mean man, and who will not agree with me in calling him noble? Certainly no one, however presumptuous, will deny this; for such he was, and as such les him ever he remembered." Tirahoschi supposes him to have been the same Gherardo with whom the Provençal poets were used to meet a hospitable reception. "This is probably that same Gherardo, who, together with his sons, so early as before the year 1254, gave a kind and hospitable reception to the Provençal poets." Mr. Mathias's edition, tom. i. p. 237.

^{*} That land.] Lomhardy.

[†] Ere the day.] Before the Emperor Frederick II. was defeated before Parma, in 1248. G. Villani, lib. vi. cap. 35.

[‡] The old time.] L'antica età.

Conrad; * and Guido of Castello, † named
In Gallic phrase more fitly the plain Lombard.
On this at last conclude. The church of Rome,
Mixing two governments that ill assort, 130
Hath miss'd her footing, fall'n into the mire,
And there herself and burden much defil'd."

"O Marco!" I replied, "thine arguments Convince me: and the cause I now discern, Why of the heritage no portion came To Levi's offspring. But resolve me this: Who that Gherardo is, that as thou sayst Is left a sample of the perish'd race, And for rebuke to this untoward age!"

"Either thy words," said he, "deceive, or else 140 Are meant to try me; that thou, speaking Tuscan, Appear'st not to have heard of good Gherarde; The sole addition that, by which I know him; Unless I borrow'd from his daughter Gaïa‡ Another name to grace him. God be with you. I bear you company no more. Behold The dawn with white ray glimm'ring through the mist.

I must away—the angel comes—ere he Appear." He said, and would not hear me more.

Lombards by the French,

^{*}Conrad.] Currado da Palazzo, a gentleman of Brescia. † G. do of Castello.] Of Reggio. All the Italians were called

[‡] His daughter Gaïa.] A lady equally admired for her modesty, the beauty of her person, and the excellency of her talents. Gaïa, says Tiraboschi, may perhaps lay claim to the praise of having been the first among the Italian ladies, by whom the vernacular poetry was cultivated.



CANTO XVII.

ARGUMENT.

The Poet issues from that thick vapour; and soon after his fancy represents to him in lively portraiture some noted examples of anger. This imagination is dissipated by the appearance of an angel, who marshals them onward to the fourth cornice, on which the sin of gloominess or indifference is purged; and here Virgil shows him that this vice proceeds from a defect of love, and that all love can he only of two sorts, either natural, or of the soul; of which sorts the former is always right, but the latter may err, either in respect of object or of degree.

Call to remembrance, reader, if thou e'er
Hast on an Alpine height* been ta'en by cloud,
Through which thou saw'st no better than the
mole

Doth through opacious membrane; then, whene'er The wat'ry vapours dense began to melt Into thin air, how faintly the sun's sphere Seem'd wading through them: so thy nimble thought

May image, how at first I rebeheld

The sun, that bedward now his couch o'erhung.

Thus, with my leader's feet still equaling pace, 10

From forth that cloud I came, when now expir'd

The parting beams from off the nether shores.

[•] On an alpine height.] "Nell' alpe." Although the Alps, as Landino remarks, are properly those mountains which divide Italy from France, yet from them all high mountains are, in the Tuscan language, though not in the Latin, termed Alps.

O quick and forgetive power! that sometimes dost So rob us of ourselves, we take no mark Though round about us thousand trumpets clang: What moves thee, if the senses stir not? Light Moves thee from heav'n, spontaneous, self-inform'd: Or, likelier, gliding down with swift illapse By will divine. Portray'd before me came The traces of her dire impiety, 20 Whose form was chang'd into the bird, that most Delights itself in song: * and here my mind Was inwardly so wrapt, it gave no place To aught that ask'd admittance from without. Next shower'd into my fantasy a shape As of one crucified, t whose visage spake Fell rancour, malice deep, wherein he died ; And round him Ahasuerus the great king; Esther his bride; and Mordecai the just. Blameless in word and deed. As of itself 30 That unsubstantial coinage of the brain Burst like a bubble, when the water fails That fed it; in my vision straight uprose A damsel weeping loud, and cried, "O queen! O mother! wherefore has intemperate ire

* --- The bird, that most

Delights itself in song.] I cannot think, with Vellutello, that the swallow is here meant. Dante probably alludes to the story of Philomela, as it is found in Homer's Odyssey, b. xix. 518, rather than as later poets bave told it. "She intended to slay the son of her husband's brother Amphion, incited to it by the envy of bis wife, who had six children, while herself had only two, but, through mistake, slew her own son Itylus, and for ber punishment was transformed by Jupiter into a nightingale." Couper's note on this passage.

† One crucified.] Haman. See the book of Esther, c. vii. ‡ A damsel.] Lavinia, mourning for herm other Amata, who,

impelled by grief and indignation for the supposed death of Yurnus, destroyed herself. Æn. lib. xii. 595.

Driv'n thee to loathe thy being? Not to lose Lavinia, desp'rate thou hast slain thyself. Now hast thou lost me. I am she, whose tears Mourn, ere I fall, a mother's timeless end."

E'en as a sleep breaks off, if suddenly 40 New radiance strike upon the closed lids, The broken slumber quivering ere it dies:* Thus, from before me, sunk that imagery, Vanishing, soon as on my face there struck The light, outshining far our earthly beam. As round I turn'd me to survey what place I had arriv'd at, "Here ye mount:" exclaim'd A voice, that other purpose left me none Save will so eager to behold who spake, I could not choose but gaze. As 'fore the sun, 50 That weighs our vision down, and veils his form In light transcendent, thus my virtue fail'd Unequal. "This is Spirit from above, Who marshals us our upward way, unsought: And in his own light shrouds him. As a man Doth for himself, so now is done for us. For whose waits imploring, ye sees need Of his prompt aidance, sets himself prepar'd For blunt denial, ere the suit be made. Refuse we not to lend a ready foot 60 At such inviting: haste we to ascend, Before it darken: for we may not then, Till morn again return." So spake my guide:

Æn. lib. ij. 258.

The broken slumber quivering ere it dies.] Venturi suggests that this bold and unusual metaphor may have been formed on that in Virgil.

Tempus erat quo prima quies mortalibus ægris Incipit, et dono divûm gratissima serpit.

And to one ladder both address'd our steps; And the first stair approaching, I perceiv'd Near me as 't were the waving of a wing, That fann'd my face, and whisper'd: "Blessed they, The peace-makers: " they know not evil wrath."

Now to such height above our heads were rais'd The last beams, follow'd close by hooded night, 70 That many a star on all sides through the gloom Shone out. "Why partest from me, O my strength?" So with myself I commun'd; for I felt My o'ertoil'd sinews slacken. We had reach'd Ths summit, and were fix'd like to a bark Arriv'd at land. And waiting a short space, If aught should meet mine ear in that new round, Then to my guide I turn'd and said: "Lov'd sire! Declare what guilt is on this circle purg'd. If our feet rest, no need thy speech should pause." 80

He thus to me: "The love; of good, whate'er Wanted of just proportion, here fulfils.

Here plies afresh the oar, that loiter'd ill.

But that thou mayest yet clearlier understand,

Give ear unto my words; and thou shalt cull

Some fruit may please thee well, from this delay.

"Creator, nor created being, e'er,
My son," he thus began, "was without love,
Or natural, tor the free spirit's growth.
Thou hast not that to learn. The natural still 90
Is without error: but the other swerves,
If on ill object bent, or through excess

^{*} The peace-makers.] "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. v. 9.

⁺ The love.] "A defect in our love towards God, or lukewarmness in piety, is here removed."

[†] Or natural.] Lombardi refers to the Convito, Canz. i. Tratt, 3. cap. 3. where this subject is diffusely treated by our Poet.

Of vigour, or defect. While e'er it seeks The primal blessings,* or with measure due The inferior t no delight, that flows from it. Partakes of ill. But let it warp to evil. Or with more ardour than behoves, or less, Pursue the good; the thing created then Works 'gainst its Maker. Hence thou must infer That love is germin of each virtue in ve. 100 And of each act no less, that merits pain. Now since it may not be, but love intend The welfare mainly of the thing it loves. All from self-hatred are secure: and since No being can be thought t' exist apart. And independent of the first, a bar Of equal force restrains from hating that.

"Grant the distinction just; and it remains Th' evil must be another's, which is lov'd. Three ways such love is gender'd in your clay. 110 There is who hopes (his neighbour's worth de-

prest)

Pre-eminence himself; and covets hence,
For his own greatness, that another fall.
There is who so much fears the loss of power,
Fame, favour, glory, (should his fellow mount
Above him,) and so sickens at the thought,
He loves their opposite: and there is he,
Whom wrong or insult seems to gall and shame,

† The inferior.] Temporal good.

^{*} The primal blessings.] Spiritual good.

[†] Now.] "It is impossible for any being, either to hate itself, or to hate the First Cause of all, by which it exists. We can therefore only rejoice in the evil which befals others."

[§] There is.] The proud. [There is.] The envious.

There is he. The resentful.

That he doth thirst for vengeance; and such needs Must doat on other's evil. Here beneath, 120 This threefold love is mourn'd. Of th' other sort Be now instructed; that which follows good, But with disorder'd and irregular course.

"All indistinctly apprehend a bliss,
On which the soul may rest; the hearts of all
Yearn after it; and to that wished bourn
All therefore strive to tend. If ye behold,
Or seek it with a love remiss and lax;
This cornice, after just repenting, lays
Its penal torment on ye. Other good
There is, where man finds not his happiness:
Is it not true fruition; not that blest
Essence, of every good the branch and root.
The love too lavishly bestow'd on this,
Along three circles* over us, is mourn'd.
Account of that division tripartite
Expect not, fitter for thine own research."

^{*} Along three circles.] According to the allegorical commentators, as Venturi has observed, Reason is represented under the person of Virgil, and Sense under that of Dante. The former leaves to the latter to discover for itself the three carnal sins, avarice, gluttony, and injidinousness; having already declared the nature of the spiritual sins, pride, envy, anger, and indifference, or lukewarmness in piety, which the Italians call accidia, from the Greek word axidia, and which Chaucer vainly endeavoured to naturalize in our language. See the Persone's Tale. Lombardi refers to Thomas Aquinas, lib. i. Quest. 72a Art. 2. for the division here made by our Poet.

CANTO XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Virgil discourses further concerning the nature of love. Then a multitude of spirits rush by; two of whom, in van of the rest, record instances of zeal and fervent affection, and another, who was abbot of San Zeno in Verona, declares himself to Virgil and Dante; and lastly follow other spirits, shouting forth memorable examples of the sin for which they suffer. The Poet, pursuing his meditations, falls into a dreamy slumber.

The teacher ended, and his high discourse
Concluding, earnest in my looks inquir'd
If I appear'd content; and I, whom still
Unsated thirst to hear him urg'd, was mute,
Mute outwardly, yet inwardly I said:
"Perchance my too much questioning offends."
But he, true father, mark'd the secret wish
By diffidence restrain'd; and, speaking, gave
Me boldness thus to speak: "Master! my sight
Gathers so lively virtue from thy beams, 10
That all, thy words convey, distinct is seen.
Wherefore, I pray thee, father, whom this heart
Holds dearest, thou wouldst deign by proof t' unfold

That love, from which, as from their source, thou bring'st

All good deeds and their opposite." He then:

"To what I now disclose be thy clear ken Directed; and thou plainly shalt behold [selves How much those blind have err'd, who make them-The guides of men. The soul, created apt To love, moves versatile which way soe'er 20 Aught pleasing prompts her, soon as she is wak'd By pleasure into act. Of substance true Your apprehension* forms its counterfeit; And, in you the ideal shape presenting, Attracts the soul's regard. If she, thus drawn, Incline toward it: love is that inclining, And a new nature knit by pleasure in ye. Then, as the fire points up, and mounting seeks His birth-place and his lasting seat, e'en thus Enters the captive soul into desire, Which is a spiritual motion, that ne'er rests Before enjoyment of the thing it loves. Enough to show thee, how the truth from those Is hidden, who aver all love a thing Praise-worthy in itself: although perhapst

* Your apprehension.] It is literally, "Your apprehensive faculty derives intension from a thing really existing, and displays that intension within you, so that it makes the soul turn to it."

^{**}Perhaps.] "Our author," Venturi observes, "uses the language of the Peripatetics, which denominates the kind of things, as determinable by many differences, matter. Love then, in kind perhaps, appears good; and it is said perhaps, because, strictly speaking, in kind there is neither good nor bad, neither praiseworthy nor blameable." To this Lombardi adds, that what immediately follows, namely, that "every mark is not good although the wax be so," answers to this interpretation. For the wax is precisely as the determinable matter, and the mark or impression as the determining form; and even as the wax, which is either good, or at least not had, may, by being imprinted by a bad figure, acquire the name of bad; so may love be said generally to be good, or at least, not bad, and acquire the name of bad by being determined to an unfit object.

It's matter seem still good. Yet if the wax Be good, it follows not th' impression must."

"What love is," I return'd, "thy words, O guide! And my own docile mind, reveal. Yet thence New doubts have sprung. For, from without, if Be offer'd to us, and the spirit knows [love 40 No other footing; tend she right or wrong, Is no desert of her's." He answering thus: "What reason here discovers, I have power To show thee: that which lies beyond, expect From Beatrice, faith not reason's task. Spirit,* substantial form, with matter join'd, Not in confusion mix'd, hath in itself Specific virtue of that union born, Which is not felt except it work, nor prov'd 50 But through effect, as vegetable life By the green leaf. From whence his intellect Deduc'd it's primal notices of things, Man therefore knows not, or his appetites Their first affections; such in you, as zeal In bees to gather honey; at the first, Volition, meriting nor blame nor praise. But o'er each lower faculty supreme, That, as she list, are summon'd to her bar, Ye have that virtue in you, whose just voice 60 Uttereth counsel, and whose word should keep The threshold of assent. Here is the source, Whence cause of merit in you is deriv'd; E'en as th' affections, good or ill, she takes, Or severs, winnow'd as the chaff. Those men, #

[•] Spirit.] The human soul, which differs from that of brutes, inasmuch as though united with the body it has a separate existence of its own.

[†] That virtue.] Reason. † These men.] The great moral philosophers among the heathers.

Who, reas'ning, went to depth profoundest, mark'd That innate freedom; and were thence induc'd To leave their moral teaching to the world. Grant then, that from necessity arise All love that glows within you; to dismiss 70 Or harbour it, the pow'r is in yourselves. Remember, Beatrice, in her style, Denominates free choice by eminence The noble virtue; if in talk with thee She touch upon that theme." The moon, well nigh To midnight hour belated, made the stars Appear to wink and fade; and her broad disk Seem'd like a crag on fire, as up the vault* That course she journey'd, which the sun then warms.

When they of Rome behold him at his set

Betwixt Sardinia and the Corsic isle.

And now the weight, that hung upon my thought,
Was lighten'd by the aid of that clear spirit,
Who raiseth Andes† above Mantua's name.

I therefore, when my questions had obtain'd
Solution plain and ample, stood as one
Musing in dreamy slumber; but not long
Slumber'd; for suddenly a multitude,
The steep already turning from behind,
Rush'd on. With fury and like random rout,
As echoing on their shores at midnight heard

^{*} Up the vault.] The moon passed with a motion opposite to that of the heavens, through the constellation of the Scorpion, in which the sun is, when to those who are in Rome he appears to set between the isles of Corsica and Sardinia.

[†] Andes.] Andes, now Pietola, made more famous than Mantua, near which it is situated, by having been the birth-place of Virgil.

Ismenus and Asopus,* for his Thebes
If Bacchus' help were needed; so came these
Tumultuous, curving each his rapid step,
By eagerness impell'd of holy love.

Soon they o'ertook us; with such swiftness mov'd The mighty crowd. Two spirits at their head Cried, weeping, "Blessed Mary† sought with haste The hilly region. Cæsar,‡ to subdue llerda, darted in Marseilles his sting, 100 And flew to Spain."—"Oh, tarry not: away!" The others shouted; "let not time be lost Through slackness of affection. Hearty zeal To serve reanimates celestial grace."

"O ye! in whom intenser fervency
Haply supplies, where lukewarm erst ye fail'd,
Slow or neglectful, to absolve your part
Of good and virtuous; this man, who yet lives,
(Credit my tale, though strange) desires to' ascend,
So morning rise to light us. Therefore say
110
Which hand leads nearest to the rifted rock."

So spake my guide; to whom a shade return'd:
"Come after us, and thou shalt find the cleft.
We may not linger: such resistless will
Speeds our unwearied course. Vouchsafe us then
Thy pardon, if our duty seem to thee
Discourteous rudeness. In Verona I

^{*} Ismenus and Asopus.] Rivers near Thebes.

[†] Mary.] "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth." Luke, i. 39. 40. † Cæsar.] See Lucan. Phars. lib. iii. and iv. and Cæsar de Bello Civili. lib. i. Cæsar left Brutus to complete the siege of Marseilles, and hastened on to the attack of Afranius and Petreius, the generals of Pompey, at Herda (Lerida) in Spain.

Was abbot* of San Zeno, when the hand
Of Barbarossa grasp'd Imperial sway,
That name ne'er utter'd without tears in Milan. 120
And there is he,† hath one foot in his grave,
Who for that monastery' erc long shall weep,
Ruing his power misus'd: for that his son,
Of body ill compact, and worse in mind,
And born in evil, he hath set in place
Of its true pastor." Whether more he spake,
Or here was mute, I know not: he had sped
E'en now so far beyond us. Yet thus much
I heard, and in rememb'rance treasur'd it.

He then, who never fail'd me at my need, 130 Cried, "Hither turn. Lo! two with sharp remorse Chiding their sin." In rear of all the troop [sea These shouted: "First they died, to whom the Open'd, or ever Jordan saw his heirs: And they, who with Æneas to the end Endur'd not suffering, for their portion chose Life without glory." Soon as they had fled Past reach of sight, new thought within me rose By others follow'd fast, and each unlike Its fellow: till led on from thought to thought, 140 And pleasur'd with the fleeting train, mine eye Was clos'd, and meditation chang'd to dream.

^{*} Abbot.] Alberto, abbot of San Zeno in Verona, when Frederick I. was emperor, by whom Milan was besieged and reduced to ashes, in 1162.

[†] There is he.] Alberto della Scala, lord of Verona, who had made his natural son abbot of San Zeno

[†] First they died.] The Israelites, who on account of their disobedience died before reaching the promised land.

[§] And they.] Those Trojans, who, wearied with their voyage, chose rather to remain in Siedy with Acestes, than accompany Eneas to Italy. Virg. Æn. lib. v.

CANTO XIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Poet, after describing his dream, relates how, at the summoning of an angel, he ascends with Virgil to the fifth cornice, where the sin of avarice is cleansed, and where he finds Pope Adrian the fourth.

It was the hour,* when of diurnal heat
No reliques chafe the cold beams of the moon,
O'erpower'd by earth, or planetary sway
Of Saturn; and the geomancer† sees
His Greater Fortune up the east ascend,
Where grey dawn checkers first the shadowy cone;
When, 'fore me in my dream, a woman's shape‡
There came, with lips that stammer'd, eyes aslant,
Distorted feet, hands maim'd, and colour pale.

I look'd upon her: and, as sunshine cheers 10 Limbs numb'd by nightly cold, e'en thus my look Unloos'd her tongue; next, in brief space, her form

^{*} The hour.] Near the dawn.

[†] The geomancer.] The geomancers, says Landino, when they divined, drew a figure consisting of sixteen marks, named from so many stars which constitute the end of Aquarius and the beginning of Pisces. One of these they called "the greater fortune."

[‡] A woman's shape.] Worldly happiness. This allegory reminds us of the "Choice of Hercules."

Decrepit rais'd erect, and faded face With love's own hue illum'd. Recov'ring speech, She forthwith, warbling, such a strain began, That I, how loth soe'er, could scarce have held Attention from the song. "I," thus she sang. "I am the Syren, she, whom mariners On the wide sea are wilder'd when they hear: Such fulness of delight the list'ner feels. 20 I, from his course, Ulysses* by my lay Enchanted drew. Whoe'er frequents me once, Parts seldom; so I charm him, and his heart Contented knows no void." Or ere her mouth Was clos'd, to shame her, at her side appear'd A damet of semblance holy. With stern voice She utter'd: "Say, O Virgil! who is this?" Which hearing, he approach'd, with eyes still bent Toward that goodly presence: the' other seiz'd her.

And, her robes tearing, open'd her before, 30
And show'd the belly to me, whence a smell,
Exhaling loathsome, wak'd me. Round I turn'd
Mine eyes: and thus the teacher: "At the least
Three times my voice hath call'd thee. Rise, begone.

Let us the opening find where thou mayst pass."

I straightway rose. Now day, pour'd down from high,

Fill'd all the circuits of the sacred mount:

^{*} Ulysses.] It is not easy to determine why Ulysses, contrary to the authority of Homer, is said to have been drawn aside from his course by the song of the Syren. No improbable way of accounting for the contradiction is, to suppose that she is here represented as purposely deviating from the truth. Or Dante may lave followed some legend of the middle ages, in which the wanderings of Ulysses were represented otherwise than in Homer.

† A dame.] Philosophy, or, perhaps, Truth.

And, as we journey'd, on our shoulder smote
The early ray. I follow'd, stooping low [40
My forehead, as a man, o'ercharg'd with thought,
Who bends him to the likeness of an arch
That midway spans the flood; when thus I heard,
"Come, enter here," in tone so soft and mild,
As never met the ear on mortal strand.

With swan-like wings dispread and pointing up, Who thus had spoken marshal'd us along, Where, each side of the solid masonry, The sloping walls retir'd; then mov'd his plumes, And fanning us, affirm'd that those, who mourn,*

Are blessed, for that comfort shall be their's. 50

"What aileth thee, that still thou look'st to Began my leader; while th' angelic shape [earth?" A little over us his station took.

"New vision," I replied, "hath rais'd in me Surmisings strange and anxious doubts, whereon My soul intent allows no other thought, Or room, or entrance."—"Hast thou seen," said he, "That old enchantress, her, whose wiles alone The spirits o'er us weep for? Hast thou seen How man may free him of her bonds? Enough. 60 Let thy heels spurn the earth;† and thy rais'd ken Fix on the lure, which heav'n's eternal King Whirls in the rolling spheres." As on his feet The falcon first looks down, then to the sky Turns, and forth stretches eager for the food, That wooes him thither; so the call I heard: So onward, far as the dividing rock Gave way, I journey'd, till the plain was reach'd.

^{*} Who mourn.] "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted," Matt. v. 4.

[†] Let thy heels spurn the earth.] This is a metaphor from hawking, though less apparent than in the lines that follow.

On the fifth circle when I stood at large,
A race appear'd before me, on the ground 70
All downward lying prone and weeping sore.
"My soul* hath cleaved to the dust," I heard
With sighs so deep, they well nigh choak'd the
"O ye elect of God! whose penal woes [words.
Both hope and justice mitigate, direct

Both hope and justice mitigate, direct Tow'rds the steep rising our uncertain way."

"If ye approach secure from this our doom,
Prostration, and would urge your course with
speed,

See that ye still to rightward keep the brink."
So them the bard besought; and such the words,

Beyond us some short space, in answer came. I noted what remain'd yet hidden from them:+ Thence to my liege's eyes mine eyes I bent. And he, forthwith interpreting their suit, Beckoned his glad assent. Free then to act As pleas'd me, I drew near, and took my stand Over that shade whose words I late had mark'd. And, "Spirit!" I said, "in whom repentant tears Mature that blessed hour when thou with God Shalt find acceptance, for a while suspend For me that mightier care. Say who thou wast: Why thus ye grovel on your bellies prone; And if, in aught, ye wish my service there, Whence living I am come." He answering spake : "The cause why Heaven our back toward his cope Reverses, shalt thou know: but me know first,

^{*} My soul.] "My soul cleaveth to the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." Psalm cxix. 25.

[†] I noted what remain'd yet hidden from them.] They were ignorant, it appeared, whether Dante was come there to be purged of his sins.

The successor of Peter,* and the name And title of my lineage, from that stream + That 'twixt Chiaveri and Siestri draws His limpid waters through the lowly glen. 100 A month and little more by proof I learnt, With what a weight that robe of sov'reignty Upon his shoulder rests, who from the mire Would guard it: that each other fardel seems But feathers in the balance. Late, alas! Was my conversion: but when I became Rome's pastor, I discerned at once the dream And cozenage of life; saw that the heart Rested not there, and yet no prouder height Lur'd on the climber: wherefore, of that life No more enamour'd in my bosom love Of purer being kindled. For till then I was a soul in misery, alienate From God, and covetous of all earthly things: Now, as thou seest, here punish'd for my doting. Such cleansing from the taint of avarice, Do spirits, converted, need. This mount inflicts No direr penalty. E'en as our eyes Fasten'd below, nor e'er to loftier clime Were lifted; thus hath justice level'd us, 120 Here on the earth. As avarice quench'd our love Of good, without which is no working; thus

^{*} The successor of Peter.] Ottobuono, of the family of Fieschi, Counts of Lavagno, died thirty-nine days after he became pope, with the title of Adrian V. in 1276.

[†] That stream.] The river Lavagno, in the Genoese territory; to the east of which territory are situated Siestri and Chiaveri.

[†] Were lifted.] Rosa Morando and Lombardi are very severe on Venturi's perplexity occasioned by the word "aderse." They bave none of them noticed Landino's reading of "apevee." Eds. 2484.

Here justice holds us prison'd, hand and foot Chain'd down and bound, while heaven's just Lord shall please,

So long to tarry, motionless, outstretch'd." [he, My knees I stoop'd, and would have spoke; but Ere my beginning, by his ear perceiv'd I did him reverence; and "What cause," said he, "Hath bow'd thee thus?"—"Compunction," I rejoin'd,

66 And inward awe of your high dignity." 130 "Up," he exclaim'd, "brother! upon thy feet Arise: err not: * thy fellow-servant I, ('Thine and all others') of one Sovran Power. If thou hast ever mark'd those holy sounds Of gospel truth, 'nor shall be giv'n in marriage,'t Thou mayst discern the reasons of my speech. Go thy ways now; and linger here no more. Thy tarrying is a let unto the tears, With which I hasten that whereof thou spak'st# I have on earth a kinswoman; her name 140 Alagia, worthy in herself, so ill Example of our house corrupt her not: And she is all remaineth of me there."

* Err not.] "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy bretbren that have the testimony of Jesus." Rev. xix. 10.

[†] Nor shall be giv'n in marriage.] "Since in this state we neither marry nor are given in marriage, I am no longer the spouse of the church, and therefore no longer retain my former dignity." See Matt. xxii. 30.

t That whereof thou spak'st.] See v. 89.

[§] A kinswoman.] Alagia is said to have been the wife of the Marchese Marcello Malaspina, one of the poet's protectors during his exile. See Canto viii. 133.

CANTO XX.

ARGUMENT.

Among those on the fifth cornice, Hugh Capet records illustrious examples of voluntary poverty and of bounty; then tells who he himself is, and speaks of his descendants on the French throne; and, lastly, adds some noted instances of avarice. When he has ended, the mountain shakes, and all the spirits sing "Glory to God."

ILL strives the will, 'gainst will more wise that strives:

His pleasure therefore to mine own preferr'd,
I drew the sponge* yet thirsty from the wave.
Onward I mov'd: he also onward mov'd,
Who led me, coasting still, wherever place
Along the rock was vacant; as a man
Walks near the battlements on narrow wall.
For those on th' other part, who drop by drop
Wring out their all-infecting malady,
Too closely press the verge. Accurst be thou, 10
Inveterate wolf!† whose gorge ingluts more prey,
Than every beast beside, yet is not fill'd;
So bottomless thy maw!—Ye spheres of heaven!
To whom there are, as seems, who attribute
All change in mortal state, when is the day

^{*} I drew the sponge.] "I did not persevere in my inquiries from the spirit, though still anxious to learn more."

† Wolf:] Avarice.

Of his appearing,* for whom fate reserves
To chase her hence?—With wary steps and slow
We pass'd; and I attentive to the shades,
Whom piteously I heard lament and wail;
And, 'midst the wailing, one before us heard 20
Cry out "O blessed Virgin!" as a dame
In the sharp pangs of childbed; and "How poor
Thou wast," it added, "witness that low roof
Where thou didst lay thy sacred burden down.
O good Fabricius!† thou didst virtue choose
With poverty, before great wealth with vice."

The words so pleas'd me, that desire to know
The spirit, from whose lips they seem'd to come,
Did draw me onward. Yet it spake the gift
Of Nicholas, which on the maidens he
So
Bounteous bestow'd, to save their youthful prime
Unblemish'd. "Spirit! who dost speak of deeds
So worthy, tell me who thou wast," I said,
"And why thou dost with single voice renew
Memorial of such praise. That boon vouchsaf'd
Haply shall meet reward; if I return

[•] Of his appearing.] He is thought to allude to Can Grande della Scala. See Hell, canto i. 98.

[†] Fabricius.] So our author in the second book of the De Monarchiâ, p. 121. "Nonne Fabricium, &ce." "Has not Fabricius given us another example of resisting avarice, when, poor as he was, he preserved his faith to the republic, and rejected with scorn a great sum of gold that was offered him? Our Poet in the sixth book records this, when he says—

Fabricium."

[†] Nicholas.] The story of Nicholas, is that an angel having revealed to him that the father of a family was so impoverished as to resolve on exposing the chastity of his three daughters to sale, he threw into the window of their bouse three bags of money, containing a sufficient portion for each of them.

To finish the short pilgrimage of life,

Still speeding to it's close on restless wing."

"I," answer'd he, "will tell thee; not for help,
Which thence I look for; but that in thyself
Grace so exceeding shines, before thy time
Of mortal dissolution. I was root*
Of that ill plant, whose shade such poison sheds
O'er all the Christian land, that seldom thence
Good fruit is gather'd. Vengeance soon should
come.

Had Ghent and Douay, Lille and Bruges power;†
And vengeance I of heav'n's great Judge implore.
Hugh Capet was I hight: from me descend
The Philips and the Louis, of whom France
Newly is govern'd; born of one, who ply'd 50
The slaughterer's trade; at Paris. When the race
Of ancient kings had vanish'd (all save one§

- · Root.] Hugh Capet, ancestor of Philip IV.
- + Had Ghent and Douay, Lille and Bruges power.] These cities had lately been seized by Philip IV. The spirit is made to intimate the approaching defeat of the French army by the Flemings, in the battle of Courtrai, which happened in 1302.
- † The slaughterer's trade.] This reflection on the birth of his aucestor, induced Francis I. to forhid the reading of Dante in his dominions. Hugh Capet, who came to the throne of France in 987, was however the grandson of Robert, who was the brother of Eudes, king of France in 888; and it may, therefore, well be questioned, whether by Beccaio di Parigi is meant literally one who carried on the trade of a hutcher at Pais, and whether the sanguinary disposition of Hugh Capet's father is not stigmarized by this opprobrious appellation. See Cancellieri Osservazioni, &c. Roma, 1814, p. 6.
- § All save one.] The posterity of Charlemagne, the second race of French monarchs, had failed, with the exception of Charles of Lorraine, who is said, on account of the melancholy temper of his mind, to have always clothed himself in black. Venturi suggests that Dante may have confounded him with

Wrapt up in sable weeds) within my gripe
I found the reins of empire, and such powers
Of new acquirement, with full store of friends,
That soon the widow'd circlet of the crown
Was girt upon the temples of my son,*
He, from whose bones th' anointed race begins.
Till the great dower of Provence† had remov'd
The stains,‡ that yet obscur'd our lowly blood, 60
It's sway indeed was narrow; but howe'er
It wrought no evil: there, with force and lies,
Began it's rapine: after, for amends,\$
Poitou it seiz'd, Navarre and Gascony.

Childeric III. the last of the Merovingian, or first race, who was deposed and made a monk in 751.

* My son.] Hugh Capet caused his son Robert to be crowned at Orleans.

† The great dower of Provence.] Louis IX. and his brother Charles of Anjou, married two of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. See Par. c. vi. 135.

‡ The stains.] Lombardi understands this differently from all the other commentators with whom I amacquainted. The word "vergogna" he takes in the sense of "a praiseworthy shame of doing ill;" and according to him the translation should run thus:

The shame that yet restrain'd my race from ill.

By "Provenza" he understands the estates of Toulouse, the dowry of the only daughter of Raymond, Count of Toulouse, married to a brother of Louis IX.

§ For amends.] This is ironical.

|| Poitou it seized, Navarre and Gascony.] I venture to read-Potti e Navarra prese e Guascogna,

instead of

Ponti e Normandia prese e Guascognà. Seized Ponthieu, Normandy and Gascogny.

Landino has "Pottl," and he is probably right: for Poitou was annexed to the French crown by Philip IV See Henault, Abregé Chron, A. D. 1283, &c. Normandy had been united to it long

To Italy came Charles; and for amends,
Young Conradine,* an innocent victim, slew;
And sent th' angelic teacher† back to heav'n,
Still for amends. I see the time at hand,
That forth from France invites another Charles‡
To make himself and kindred better known. 70
Unarm'd he issues, saving with that lance,
Which the arch-traitor tilted with; § and that
He carries with so home a thrust, as rives
The bowels of poor Florence. No increase

before by Philip Augustus, a circumstance of which it is difficult to imagine that Dante should have been ignorant; but Philip IV. says Henault, ibid. took the title of King of Navarre: and the subjugation of Navarre is also alluded to in the Paradise, canto xix. 140. In 1293, Philip IV. summoned Edward I. to do him homage for the duchy of Gascogny, which he had conceived the design of seizing. See G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. iv.

* Young Conradine.] Charles of Anjou put Conradino to death in 1268, and became King of Naples. See Hell, canto xxviii, 16,

and note.

† Th' angelic teacher.] Thomas Aquinas. He was reported to have been poisoned by a physician, who wished to ingratiate himself with Charles of Anjou. We shall find him in the Para-

dise, canto x.

† Another Charles.] Charles of Valois, brother of Philip IV. was sent by Pope Boniface VIII. to settle the disturbed state of Florence. In consequence of the measures he adopted for that purpose, our poet and his friends were condemned to exile and death. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. xlviii.

§!- with that lance,

Which the arch-traitor tilted with.]
—— con la lancia
Con la qual giostrò Giuda.

If I remember right, in one of the old romances, Judas is represented tilting with our Saviour.

Of territory hence, but sin and shame Shall be his guerdon; and so much the more As he more lightly decms of such foul wrong. I see the other,* (who a prisoner late Had stept on shore,) exposing to the mart His daughter, whom he bargains for, as do 80 The Corsairs for their slaves. O avarice! What canst thou more, who hast subdued our blood So wholly to thyself, they feel no care Of their own flesh? To hide with direr guilt Past ill and future, lo! the flower-de-lucet Enters Alagna; in his Vicar, Christ Himself a captive, and his mockery Acted again. Lo! to his holy lip The vinegar and gall once more applied; And he 'twixt living robbers doom'd to bleed. 90 Lo! the new Pilate, of whose cruelty Such violence cannot fill the measure up, With no decree to sanction, pushes on

* The other.] Charles, King of Naples, the eldest son of Charles of Anjou, having, contrary to the directions of his father, engaged with Ruggier de Lauria, the admiral of Peter of Arragon, was made prisoner, and carried inte Sicily, June, 1284. He afterwards, in consideration of a large sum of money, married his

daughter to Azzo VIII. Marquis of Ferrara.

† The flower-de-luce.] Boniface VIII. was seized at Alagna in Campania, by the order of Philip IV. in the year 1303, and soon after died of grief. G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. 63. "As it pleased God, the heart of Boniface being petrified with grief, through the injury he had sustained, when he came to Rome, he fell into a strange malady, for he gnawed himself as one frantic, and in this state expired." His character is strongly drawn hy the annalist in the next chapter. Thus, says Landino, was verified the prophecy of Celestine respecting him, that he should enter on the popedom like a fox, reign like a lion, and die like a dog.

Into the temple* his yet eager sails. "O sovran Master! when shall I rejoice To see the vengeance, which thy wrath, well-pleas'd. In secret silence broods ?- While daylight lasts. So long what thou didst heart of her, sole spouse Of the Great Spirit, and on which thou turn'dst To me for comment, is the general theme Of all our prayers: but, when it darkens, then A different strain we utter; then record Pygmalion +, whom his gluttonous thirst of gold Made traitor, robber, parricide: the woes Of Midas, which his greedy wish ensued, Mark'd for derision to all future times: And the fond Achan, s how he stole the prey, That yet he seems by Joshua's ire pursued. Sapphira with her husband next we blame; And praise the forefeet, that with furious ramp 110 Spurn'd Heliodorus. All the mountain round Rings with the infamy of Thracia's king, ¶

Who slew his Phrygian charge: and last a shout

--- Ille Sychæum

Impius ante aras, atque auri cæcus amore, Clam ferro incautum superat. Virg. Æn. l. 1. 350.

§ Achan.] Joshua, vii.

^{*} Into the temple.] It is uncertain whether our Poet alludes still to the event mentioned in the preceding note, or the destruction of the order of the Templars in 1310, but the latter appears more probable.

[†] What didst thou hear.] See v. 21.

t Pygmalion.]

[|] Heliodorus.] "For there appeared unto them an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely and smote at Heliodorus with his fore feet." 2 Maccabees, iii. 25.

[¶] Thracia's king.] Polymnestor, the murderer of Polydorus. Hell, canto xxx. 19.

Ascends: 'Declare, O Crassus!* for thou know'st, The flavour of thy gold.' The voice of each Now high, now low, as each his impulse prompts, Is led through many a pitch, acute or grave. Therefore, not singly, I erewhile rehears'd That blessedness we tell of in the day:

But near me, none, beside, his accent rais'd." 120

From him we now had parted, and essay'd With utmost efforts to surmount the way; When I did feel, as nodding to its fall, The mountain tremble; whence an icy chill Seiz'd on me, as on one to death convey'd. So shook not Delos, when Latona there, Couch'd to bring forth the twin-born eyes of heaven.

Forthwith from every side a shout arosc
So vehement, that suddenly my guide [thee." 180
Drew near, and cried: "Doubt not while I conduct
"Glory!" all shouted (such the sounds mine car
Gather'd from those, who near me swell'd the
sounds)

"Glory in the highest be to God." We stood Immoveably suspended, like to those, The shepherds, who first heard in Bethlehem's field That song: till ceas'd the trembling, and the song Was ended: then our hallow'd path resum'd, Eving the prostrate shadows, who renew'd Their custom'd mourning. Never in my breast Did ignorance so struggle with desire 140 Of knowledge, if my memory do not err, As in that moment; nor through haste dar'd 1 To question, nor myself could aught discern. So on I far'd, in thoughtfulness and dread.

^{*} Crassus.] Marcus Crassus, who fell miserably in the Parthian war. See Appian. Parthica.

CANTO XXI.

ARGUMENT.

The two Poets are overtaken by the spirit of Statius, who, being cleansed, is on his way to Paradise, and who explains the cause of the mountain shaking, and of the hymn; his joy at beholding Virgil.

The natural thirst, ne'er quench'd but from the well*

Whereof the woman of Samaria crav'd. Excited; haste along the cumber'd path, After my guide, impell'd; and pity moy'd My bosom for the 'vengeful doom though just. When lo! even as Luke† relates, that Christ Appear'd unto the two upon their way, New-risen from his vaulted grave; to us A shade appear'd, and after us approach'd Contemplating the crowd beneath it's feet. 10 We were not ware of it; so first it spake, Saying, "God give you peace, my brethren!" then Sudden we turn'd: and Virgil such salute, As fitted that kind greeting, gave; and cried: " Peace in the blessed council be thy lot, Awarded by that righteous court which me

^{*}The well.] "The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not." John, iv. 15.

⁺ Luke.] Chapter xxiv. 13.

To everlasting banishment exiles." **fwhile** "How!" he exclaim'd, nor from his speed mean-Desisting: "If that we be spirits whom God Vouchsafes not room above; who up the height 20 Has been thus far your guide ?" To whom the bard : "If thou observe the tokens, which this man, ! Trac'd by the finger of the angel, bears; 'Tis plain that in the kingdom of the just [wheel He needs must share. But sithence she,† whose Spins day and night, for him not yet had drawn That varn, which, on the fatal distaff pil'd, Clotho apportions to each wight that breathes: His soul, that sister is to mine and thine. Not of herself could mount; for not like our's 30 Her ken: whence I, from forth the ample gulf Of hell, was ta'en, to lead him, and will lead Far as my lore avails. But, if thou know, Instruct us for what cause, the mount erewhile Thus shook, and trembled: wherefore all at once Seem'd shouting, even from his wave-wash'd foot."

That questioning so tallied with my wish,
The thirst did feel abatement of its edge
E'en from expectance. He forthwith replied:
"In its devotion, nought irregular
This mount can witness, or by punctual rule
Unsanction'd; here from every change exempt,
Other than that, which heaven in itself
Doth of itself receive. no influence

^{*} The tokens.] The letter P for Peccata, sins, inscribed upon his forehead by the Augel, in order to his being cleared of them in his passage through Purgatory to Paradise.

[†] She.] Lachesis, one of the three fates. † — that, whi h heaven in itself

Doth of itself receive.] Venturi, I think rightly, interprets this to be lights

Can reach us. Tempest none, shower, hail or snow, Hoar frost or dewy moistness, higher falls Than that brief scale of threefold steps: thick clouds, Nor scudding rack, are ever seen: swift glance Ne'er lightens; nor Thaumantian* Iris gleams, That yonder often shifts on each side heav'n. Vapour adust doth never mount above The highest of the trinal stairs, whereon Peter's vicegerent stands. Lower perchance, With various motion rock'd, trembles the soil: But here, through wind in earth's deep hollow pent, I know not how, yet never trembled: then Trembles, when any spirit feels itself So purified, that it may rise, or move For rising; and such loud acclaim ensues. Purification, by the will alone, 60 Is prov'd, that free to change society Seizes the soul rejoicing in her will. Desire of bliss is present from the first; But strong propension hinders, to that wish By the just ordinance of heav'n oppos'd; Propension now as eager to fulfil Th' allotted torment, as erewhile to sin. And I, who in this punishment had lain Five hundred years and more, but now have felt Free wish for happier clime. Therefore thou felt'st 70

The mountain tremble; and the spirits devout Heard'st, over all his limits, utter praise To that liege Lord, whom I entreat their joy

Θαυμαντος Sυγατης. Hesiod Theog. 780.
Compare Plato Theæt. v. ii. p. 75. Bip. edit. Virg. Æn. ix. 5. and Spenser, Faery Queen, b. v. c. iii. st. 25.
Fair is Thaumantias in her crystal gown. Drummond.

^{*} Thaumantian.] Figlia di Taumante.

To hasten." Thus he spake: and, since the draught Is grateful ever as the thirst is keen,
No words may speak my fulness of content.

"Now," said the instructor sage, "I see the net" That takes ye here; and how the toils are loos'd: Why rocks the mountain, and why ye rejoice. Vouchsafe, that from thy lips I next may learn Who on the earth thou wast: and wherefore here. So many an age, wert prostrate."-" In that time, When the good Titus, t with Heav'n's King to help, Aveng'd those piteous gashes, whence the blood By Judas sold did issue; with the name # Most lasting and most honour'd, there, was I Abundantly renown'd," the shade replied, "Not yet with faith endued. So passing sweet, My vocal spirit; from Tolosa, & Rome To herself drew me, where I merited 90 A myrtle garland to inwreath my brow. Statius they name me still. Of Thebes I sang, And next of great Achilles: but i' th' way Fell | with the second burthen. Of my flame Those sparkles were the seeds, which I deriv'd From the bright fountain of celestial fire That feeds unnumber'd lamps; the song I mean Which sounds Æneas' wand'rings: that the breast I hung at; that the nurse, from whom my veins

wish to satisfy the divine justice."

t The name.] The name of Poet.

| Fell.] Statius lived to write only a small part of the Achik

leid.

^{*} I see the net.] "1 perceive that ye are detained here by your

[†] When the good Titles] When it was so ordered by the divine Providence that Titus, by the destruction of Jerusalem, should avenge the death of our Saviour on the Jews.

[§] From Tolo.a.] Dante, as many others have done, confounds Statius the poet, who was a Neapolitan, with a rhetorician of the same name, who was of Tolosa, or 1 houlouse.

Drank inspiration: whose authority
Was ever sacred with me. To have liv'd
Coeval with the Mantuan, I would bide
The revolution of another sun
Beyond my stated years in banishment."

The Mantuan, when he heard him, turn'd to me; And holding silence, by his countenance Enjoin'd me silence: but the power, which wills. Bears not supreme control: laughter and tears Follow so closely on the passion prompts them, They wait not for the motions of the will 110 In natures most sincere. I did but smile.* As one who winks; and thereupon the shade Broke off, and peer'd into mine eyes, where best Our looks interpret. "So to good event Mayst thou conduct such great emprize," he cried, "Say, why across thy visage beam'd, but now, The lightning of a smile." On either part Now am I straiten'd; one conjures me speak, The' other to silence binds me: whence a sigh I utter, and the sigh is heard. "Speak on," The teacher cried: " and do not fear to speak; But tell him what so earnestly he asks." Whereon I thus: "Perchance, O ancient spirit! Thou marvel'st at my smiling. There is room For yet more wonder. He, who guides my ken On high, he is that Mantuan, led by whom Thou didst presume of men and gods to sing. If other cause thou deem'dst for which I smil'd. Leave it as not the true one; and believe 129

^{*} I did but smile.] "I smiled no more than one would do who wished by a smile to intimate his consciousness of any thing to another person."

Those words, thou spak'st of him, indeed the cause." [feet;

Now down he bent to' embrace my teacher's But he forbade him: "Brother! do it not: Thou art a shadow, and behold'st a shade." He, rising, answer'd thus: "Now hast thou prov'd The force and ardour of the love I bear thee, When I forget we are but things of air, And, as a substance, treat an empty shade."

CANTO XXII.

ARGUMENT.

Dante, Virgil, and Statius mount to the sixth cornice, where the sin of gluttony is cleansed, the two Latin Poets discoursing by the way. Turning to the right, they find a tree hung with sweet-smelling fruit, and watered by a shower that issues from the rock. Voices are heard to proceed from among the leaves, recording examples of temperance.

Now we had left the angel, who had turn'd To the sixth circle our ascending step; One gash from off my forehead raz'd; while they, Whose wishes tend to justice, shouted forth, "Blessed!" and ended with "I thirst;" and I. More nimble than along the other straits, So journey'd, that, without the sense of toil, I follow'd upward the swift-footed shades: When Virgil thus began: "Let its pure flame From virtue flow, and love can never fail 10 To warm another's bosom, so the light Shine manifestly forth. Hence, from that hour, When, 'mongst us in the purlieus of the deep, Came down the spirit of Aquinum's bard,+ Who told of thine affection, my good will

^{*} Blessed.] "Blessed be they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. v. 6.

[†] Aquinum's bard.] Juvenal had celebrated his contemporary, Statius, Sat. vii. 82; though some critics imagine that there is secret derision couched under his praise.

Vot. XLVI,

Hath been for thee of quality as strong
As ever link'd itself to one not seen.
Therefore these stairs will now seem short to me.
But tell me: and, if to secure, I loose
The rein with a friend's license, as a friend
Forgive me, and speak now as with a friend:
How chanc'd it covetous desire could find
Place in that bosom, 'midst such ample store
Of wisdom, as thy zeal had treasur'd there?''

First somewhat mov'd to laughter by his words, Statius replied: " Each syllable of thine Is a dear pledge of love. Things oft appear, That minister false matter to our doubts. When their true causes are remov'd from sight. Thy question doth assure me, thou believ'st I was on earth a covetous man; perhaps Because thou found'st me in that circle plac'd. Know then I was too wide of avarice: And e'en for that excess, thousands of moons Have wax'd and wan'd upon my sufferings. And were it not that I with heedful care Noted, where thou exclaim'st as if in ire With human nature, 'Why,* thou cursed thirst Of gold! dost not with juster measure guide The appetite of mortals?' I had met The fierce encounter+ of the voluble rock. Then was I ware that, with too ample wing,

^{*} Why.] Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,

Auri sacra fomes? Virg. Æn. lib. iii. 57.

Venturi supposes, that Dante might have mistaken the meaning of the word sacra, and construed it "holy," instead of "cursed." But I see no necessity for having recourse to so improbable a conjecture.

[†] The fierce encounter.] See Hell, canto vii, 26.

The hands may haste to lavishment; and turn'd, As from my other evil, so from this,
In penitence. How many from their grave
Shall with shorn locks* arise, who living, ay,
And at life's last extreme, of this offence,
Through ignorance, did not repent! And know,
The fault, which lies direct from any sin
In level opposition, here, with that,

Wastes its green rankness on one common heap.
Therefore, if I have been with those, who wail
Their avarice, to cleanse me; through reverse
Of their transgression, such hath been my lot."

To whom the sovran of the pastoral song:
"While thou didst sing that cruel warfare wag'd
By the twin sorrow of Jocasta's womb,†
From thy discourse with Clio; there, it seems
As faith had not been thine; without the which,
Good deeds suffice not. And, if so, what sun 60
Rose on thee, or what candle pierc'd the dark,
That thou didst after see to hoist the sail,
And follow where the fisherman had led?"

He answering thus: "By thee conducted first, I enter'd the Parnassian grots, and quaff'd Of the clear spring; illumin'd first by thee, Open'd mine eyes to God. Thou didst, as one, Who, journeying through the darkness, bears a light Behind, that profits not himself, but makes His followers wise, when thou exclaimedst, 'Lo! 70

Stat. Thebaid. i. 42.

^{*} With shorn locks.] Ibid. 58.

[†] The twin sorrow of Jocasta's womb] Eteocles and Polyniers.

t With Clio.7

Quen prius heroum Clio dabis? immodicum iræ Tydea? laurigeri subitos an vatis hiatus?

64

A renovated world. Justice return'd. Times of primeval innocence restor'd, And a new race descended from above. Poet and Christian both to thee I owed. That thou mayst mark more clearly what I trace, My hand shall stretch forth to inform the lines With livelier colouring. Soon o'er all the world, By messengers from heav'n, the true belief Teem'd now prolific; and that word of thine, Accordant, to the new instructors chim'd. Induc'd by which agreement, I was wont Resort to them; and soon their sanctity So won upon me, that, Domitian's rage Pursuing them, I mix'd my tears with their's; And while on earth I stay'd, still succour'd them; And their most righteous customs made me scorn All sects besides. Before* I led the Greeks, In tuneful fiction, to the streams of Thebes, I was baptiz'd; but secretly through fear, Remain'd a Christian, and conform'd long time 90 To Pagan rites. Four centuries and more, I for that lukewarmness, was fain to pace Round the fourth circle. Thou then, who hast rais'd The covering which did hide such blessings from me.

Whilst much of this ascent is yet to climb, Say, if thou know, where our old Terence† bides, Cæcilius, Plautus, Varro:‡ if condemn'd

^{*} Before.] Before I had composed the Thebaid.

⁺ Our old Terence.] "Antico" which is found in many of the old editions, seems preferable to "amico."

[†] Varro.] "Quam multa pene omnia tradidit Varro." Quiatilian Instit. Orat. lib. xii. "Vix aperto ad philosophiam adito, primus M. Varro veterum omnium doctissimus." Sadolet. de liberis recte instit. Edit. Lugd. 1533. p. 137.

They dwell, and in what province of the deep."
"These," said my guide, "with Persius and myself,

And others many more, are with that Greek,* 100 Of mortals, the most cherish'd by the nine, In the first ward of darkness. There, oft-times, We of that mount hold converse, on whose top For aye our nurses live. We have the bard Of Pella, and the Teian, Agatho, Simonides, and many a Grecian else Ingarlanded with laurel. Of thy train, Antigone is there, Deiphile, Argia, and as sorrowful as erst Ismene, and who show'd Langia's wave:** 110 Deidamia with her sisters there, And blind Tiresias' daughter, and the bride

^{*} That Greek.] Homer.

⁺ In the first ward.] In Limbo.

t — The Bard Of Pella.] Euripides.

[§] The Teian.] Euripide v' è nosco e Anacreonte.

The Monte Casino MS. reads "Antifonte" "Antipho," instead of "Anacreonte." Dante probably knew little more of these Greek writers than the names.

[#] Agatho.] Agatho, the dramatic writer, whose name, at least, appears to have been familiar in the middle ages, for, besides the mention of him in the text, he is quoted by Dante in the Treatise de Monarchia, lib. iii.

[¶] Of thy train.] " Of those celebrated in thy Poem."

^{**} Who show'd Langia's wave.] Hypsipile. See note to Canto xxvi. v. 87.

^{††} Tiresias' Daughter.] Dante, as some have thought, had forgotten that he had placed Manto, the daughter of Tiresias, among the sorcerers. See Hell, canto xx. Vellutello endeavours, rather awkwardly, to reconcile the apparent inconsistency, by observing, that although she was placed there as a sinner, yet, as one of famous memory, she had also a place among the worthies in Limbo.

Sea-born of Peleus."* Either poet now
Was silent; and no longer by th' ascent
Or the steep walls obstructed, round them east
Inquiring eyes. Four handmaids† of the day
Had finish'd now their office, and the fifth
Was at the chariot-beam, directing still
It's flamy point aloof; when thus my guide:
"Methinks, it well behoves us to the brink 120
Bend the right shoulder, circuiting the mount,
As we have ever us'd." So custom there
Was usher to the road; the which we chose
Less doubtful, as that worthy shade‡ complied.

They on before me went: I sole pursued,
List'ning their speech, that to my thoughts convey'd
Mysterious lessons of sweet poesy.
But soon they ceas'd; for midway of the road
A tree was found, with goodly fruitage hung,
And pleasant to the smell: and as a fir,
130
Upward from bough to bough, less ample spreads;
So downward this less ample spread; that none,

Lombardi, or rather the Della Crusca academicians, exense our author better, by observing that Tiresias had a daughter named Daphne. See Diodorns Sienlus, lib. iv. § 66.

* ---- The bride

Sea-born of Peleus.] Thetis.

+ Four handmaids.] Compare Canto xii. v. 74.

That worthy shade.] Statius.

§ Downward this less ample spread.] The early commentators understand that this tree had its root upward and the boughs downward; and this opinion, however derided by their successors, is not a little countenanced by the imitation of Frezzi, who lived so nearthe time of our Poet:

Su dentro al cielo avea la sua radice, E giù inverso terra i rami spande.

Il Quadrir, lib, iva cap. 7.

- It had in heav'n

It's root above, and downward to the earth Stretch'd forth the branches.

Methinks, aloft may climb. Upon the side. That clos'd our path, a liquid crystal fell From the steep rock, and through the sprays above Stream'd showering. With associate step the bards Drew near the plant; and, from amidst the leaves A voice was heard: "Ye shall be chary of me:" And after added: "Mary took more thought* For joy and honour of the nuptial feast. 140 Than for herself, who answers now for you. The women of old Romet were satisfied With water for their beverage. Daniel fed On pulse, and wisdom gain'd. The primal age Was beautiful as gold: and hunger then Made acorns tasteful; thirst, each rivulet Run nectar. Honey and locusts were the food, Whereon the Baptist in the wilderness Fed, and that eminence of glory reach'd. That greatness, which the' Evangelist records." 150

^{*} Mary tock more thought.] "The blessed virgin, who answers for you now in heaven, when she said to Jesus, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, 'they have no wine.' regarded not the gratification of her own taste, but the honour of the nuptial hanquet."

[†] The women of old Rome.] See Valerius Maximus, l. ii. c. 1.

[†] Daniel.] "Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I heseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink." Daniel, i. 11, 12.

[&]quot;Thus Melzer took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel hed understanding in all visions and dreams," *Did*. 15, 17.



CANTO XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

They are overtaken by the spirit of Forese, who had been a friend of our Poet's on earth, and who now inveighs bitterly against the immodest dress of their countrywomen at Florence.

On the green leaf mine eyes were fix'd, like his Who throws away his days in idle chase Of the diminutive birds, when thus I heard The more than father warn me: "Son! our time Asks thriftier using. Linger not: away."

Thereat my face and steps at once I turn'd Toward the sages, by whose converse cheer'd I journey'd on, and felt no toil: and lo!

A sound of weeping, and a song: "My lips,*
O Lord!" and these so mingled, it gave birth
To pleasure and to pain. "O Sire belov'd!
Say what is this I hear." Thus I inquir'd.

"Spirits," said he, "who, as they go, perchance, Their debt of duty pay." As on their road The thoughtful pilgrims, overtaking some Not known unto them, turn to them, and look, But stay not; thus, approaching from behind With speedier motion, eyed us, as they pass'd, A crowd of spirits silent and devout.

The eyes of each were dark and hollow: pale 20

^{*} My lips.] "O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." Psalm li. 15.

Their visage, and so lean withal, the bones Stood staring through the skin. I do not think Thus dry and meagre Erisicthon show'd, When pinch'd by sharp-set famine to the quick.

"Lo!" to myself I mus'd, "the race, who lost Jerusalem, when Mary* with dire beak Prey'd on her child." The sockets seem'd as rings, From which the gems were dropt. Who reads the name+

Of man upon his forehead, there the M
Had trac'd most plainly. Who would deem, that
scent

Of water and an apple could have prov'd
Powerful to generate such pining want,
Not knowing how it wrought? While now I stood,
Wond'ring what thus could waste them (for the cause
Of their gaunt hollowness and scaly rind
Appear'd not) lo! a spirit turn'd his eyes
In their deep-sunken cells, and fasten'd them
On me, then cried with vehemence aloud:
"What grace is this vouchsaf'd me?" By his looks
I ne'er had recogniz'd him: but the voice
40
Brought to my knowledge what his cheer conceal'd.
Remembrance of his alter'd lineaments
Was kindled from that spark; and I agniz'd
The visage of Forese.‡ "Ah! respect
This wan and leprous-wither'd skin," thus he

† Forese.] One of the brothers of Piccarda, she who is again spoken of in the next canto, and introduced in the Paradise.

^{*.}When Mary.] Josephus, De Bello Jud. lib, vii. c. xxi. p. 954. Ed. Genev. fol 1611. The shocking story is well told.

[†] Who reads the name.] "He, who pretends to distinguish the letters which form OMO in the features of the human face, might easily have traced ont the M on their emaciated countenances." The temples, nose, and forehead are supposed to represent this letter; and the eyes the two O's placed within each side of it.

Suppliant implor'd, "this macerated flesh.

Speak to me truly of thyself. And who

Are those twain spirits, that escort thee there?

Be it not said thou scorn'st to talk with me." [dead

"That face of thine," I answer'd him, "which I once bewail'd, disposes me not less 51 For weeping, when I see it thus transform'd. Say then, by Heav'n, what blasts ye thus? The I wonder, ask not speech from me: unapt [whilst Is he to speak, whom other will employs."

He thus: "The water and the plant, we pass'd, With power are gifted, by th' Eternal will Infus'd; the which so pines me. Every spirit, Whose song bewails his gluttony indulg'd Too grossly, here in hunger and in thirst 60 Is purified. 'The odour, which the fruit, And spray that showers upon the verdure, breathe, Inflames us with desire to feed and drink. Nor once alone, encompassing our route, We come to add fresh fuel to the pain: Pain, said I? solace rather: for that will, To the tree, leads us, by which Christ was led To call on Eli, joyful, when he paid Our ransom from his vein." I answering thus: " Forese! from that day, in which the world 70 For better life thou changedst, not five years Have circled. If the power* of sinning more

canto iii. Cionacci, in his Storia della Beata Umiliana, Parte iv. cap. i. is referred to by Lombardi, in order to show that Forese was also the brother of Corso Donati, our author's political enemy. See next Canto, v. 81. Tiraboschi, after Crescimbeni, enumerates him among the Tuscan poets. Stor. della Poes. It. v. i. p. 139.

If the power.] "If thou didst delay thy repentance to the last, when thou hadst lost the power of sinning, how happens is thou art arrived here so early?"

Were first concluded in thee, ere thou knew'st
That kindly grief which re-espouses us
To God, how hither art thou come so soon?
I thought to find thee lower,* there, where time
Is recompense for time." He straight replied:
"To drink up the sweet wormwood of affliction
I have been brought thus early, by the tears
Stream'd down my Nella's† cheeks. Her prayers
devout,

Her sighs have drawn me from the coast, where oft

Expectance lingers; and have set me free
From the' other circles. In the sight of God
So much the dearer is my widow priz'd,
She whom I lov'd so fondly, as she ranks
More singly eminent for virtuous deeds.
The tract, most barb'rous of Sardinia's isle,‡
Hath dames more chaste, and modester by far,
Than that wherein I left her. O sweet brother!
What wouldst thou have me say ?§ A time to come 90
Stands full within my view, to which this hour
Shall not be counted of an ancient date,
When from the pulpit shall be loudly warn'd
The' unblushing dames of Florence, lest they bare
Unkerchief'd bosoms to the common gaze.
What savage woman hath the world e'er seen

+ My Nella.] The wife of Forese.

^{*} Lower.] In the Ante Purgatory. See Canto ii.

[†] The tract, most barb'rous of Sardinia's isle.] The Barbagia is a part of Sardinia, to which that name was given, on account of the uncivilized state of its inhabitants, who are said to have gone nearly naked.

[§] What wouldst thou have me say.] The interrogative, which Lombardi would dismiss from this place, as unmeaning and superfluous, appears to me to be the natural result of a deep feeting, and to prepare us for the invective that follows.

What Saracens,* for whom their needed scourge
Of spiritual or other discipline,
To force them walk with cov'ring on their limbs?
But did they see, the shameless ones, what Heav'n
Wafts on swift wing toward them while I speak, 101
Their mouths were op'd for howling: they shall
Of sorrow (unless foresight cheat me here) [taste
Or ere the cheek of him be cloth'd with down,
Who is now rock'd with lullaby asleep.
Ah! now, my brother, hide thyself no more:
Thou seest† how not I alone, but all,
Gaze, where thou veil'st the intercepted sun."

Whence I replied: " If thou recal to mind What we were once together, even yet 110 Remembrance of those days may grieve thee sore. That I forsook that life, was due to him Who there precedes me, some few evenings past, When she was round, who shines with sister lamp To his that glisters yonder," and I show'd The sun. "'T is he, who through profoundest night Of the true dead has brought me, with this flesh As true, that follows. From that gloom the aid Of his sure comfort drew me on to climb, And, climbing, wind along this mountain-steep, 120 Which rectifies in you whate'er the world Made crooked and depray'd. I have his word. That he will bear me company as far

^{*} Saracens.] "This word, during the middle ages, was indiscriminately applied to Pagans and Mahometans; in short, to all nations (except the Jews) who did not profess Christianity." Mr. Ellis's Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances, vol. i. p. 196. (a note) Lond. 8vo. 1805.

⁺ Thou seest.] Thou seest how we wonder that thou art here in a living body.

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As till I come where Beatrice dwells:
But there must leave me. Virgil is that spirit,
Who thus hath promis'd," and I pointed to him;
"The other is that shade, for whom so late
Your realm, as he arose, exulting, shook
Through every pendent cliff and rocky bound."

CANTO XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Forese points out several others by name who are here, like biaself, purifying themselves from the vice of gluttony; and, amongst the rest, Buonaggiunta of Lucca, with whom our Poet converses. Forese then predicts the violent end of Dante's political enemy, Corso Donati; and, when he has quitted them, the Poet, in company with Statius and Virgil, arrives at another tree, from whence issue voices that record ancient examples of gluttony; and proceeding forwards, they are directed by an angel which way to ascend to the next cornice of the mountain.

Our journey was not slacken'd by our talk,
Nor yet our talk by journeying. Still we spake,
And urg'd our travel stoutly, like a ship
When the wind sits astern. The shadowy forms,
That seem'd things dead and dead again, drew in
At their deep-delved orbs rare wonder of me,
Perceiving I had life; and I my words
Continued, and thus spake: "He journeys* up
Perhaps more tardily than else he would,
For others' sake. But tell me, if thou know'st,
Where is Piccarda?† Tell me, if I see
Any of mark, among this multitude

† Piccarda.] See Paradise, canto iii.

^{*} He journeys.] The soul of Statius perhaps proceeds more slowly, in order that he may enjoy as long as possible the company of Virgil.

Who eye me thus."—" My sister (she for whom, 'Twixt beautiful and good, I cannot say Which name was fitter) wears e'en now her crown, And triumphs in Olympus." Saying this, He added: Since spare diet* hath so worn Our semblance out, 't is lawful here to name Each one. This," and his finger then he rais'd, "Is Buonaggiunta†—Buonaggiunta, he 20 Of Lucca: and that face beyond him, pierc'd Unto a leaner fineness than the rest, Had keeping of the church: he was of Tours,‡ And purges by wan abstinence away Bolsena's eels and cups of muscadel."

* Diet.] Dieta.

And dieted with fasting every day.

Spenser, F. Q. b. i. c. i. st. 25.

Spare fast that oft with gods doth diet.

Milton, Il Penseroso.

† Buonaggiunta.] Buonaggiunta Urbiciani, of Lucca. "There is a canzone by this poet, printed in the collection made by the Giunti. (p. 209.) and a sonnet to Guido Guinicelli in that made by Corbinelli, (p. 169.) from which we collect that he lived not about 1230. as Quadrio supposes. (t. ii. p. 159.) but towards the end of the thirteenth century. Concerning other poems by Buonaggiunta, that are preserved in MS. in some libraries, Crescimbeni may be consulted." Tiraboschi, Mr. Mathias's ed. v. i. p. 115.

† He was of Tours.] Simon of Tours became Pope with the title of Martin IV. in 1281, and died in 1285.

§ Bolsena's eels and cups of muscadel.] The Nidobeatina edition and the Monte Casino MS. agree in reading

L'auguille di Bolsena in la vernaccia;

from which it would seem, that Martin the Fourth refined so much on epicurism as to have his eels killed by being put into the wine called vernaccia, in order to heighten their flavour. The Latin annotator on the MS. relates, that the following epitaph was inscribed on the sepulchre of the pope:—

Gaudent anguillæ, quod mortuus hie jacet ille, Qui quasi morte reas excoriabat eas.

He show'd me many others, one by one: And all, as they were nam'd, seem'd well content; For no dark gesture I discern'd in any. I saw, through hunger, Ubaldino" grind 50 His teeth on emptiness; and Boniface,+ That way'd the crozier o'er a num'rous flock. I saw the Marquis, who had time erewhile To swill at Forli with less draught: yet so. Was one ne'er sated. I howe'er, like him That, gazing 'midst a crowd, singles out one. So singled him of Lucca; for methought Was none amongst them took such note of me. Somewhat I heard him whisper of Gentucca :# The sound was indistinct, and murmur'd there. Where justice, that so strips them, fix'd her sting, 40

Ubaldino.] Ubaldino degli Ubaldini, of Pila, in the Florentine territory.

⁺ Boniface.] Archbishop of Ravenna. By Venturi he is called Bonifazio de' Fieschi, a Genoese; by Vellutello, the son of the above-mentioned Ubaldini; and by Landino, Francioso, a Frenchman.

[†] Crozier.] It is uncertain whether the word "rocco," in the original, means a "crozier" or a bishop's rotchet, that is, his episcopal gown. In support of the latter interpretation Lombardi cites Du Fresne's Glossary, article Roccus. "Rocchettum hodie vocant vestem linteam episcoporum—quasi parvum roccum;" and explains the verse,

Che pasturò col rocco molte genti;
"who, from the revenues of his bishoprick, supported in luxury
a large train of dependents."

[§] The Marquis.] The Marchese de' Rigogliosi, of Forli. When his butler told him it was commonly reported in the city that he did nothing but drink, he is said to have answered: "And do you tell them that I am always thirsty."

^{||} Gentucca.] Of this lady it is thought that our Poet became enamoured during his exile. See note to canto xxxi. 56.

I There.] In the throat, the part in which they felt the torment inflicted by the divine justice.

"Spirit!" said I, "it seems as thou wouldst fain Speak with me. Let me hear thee. Mutual wish To converse prompts, which let us both indulge."

He, answ'ring, straight began: "Woman is born, Whose brow no wimple shades yet, that shall make My city please thee, blame it as they may. Go then with this forewarning. If aught false My whisper too implied, th' event shall tell. But say, if of a truth I see the man Of that new lay th' inventor, which begins 50 With 'Ladies, ye that con the lore of love.'"

To whom I thus: "Count of me but as one, Who am the scribe of love; that, when he breathes, Take up my pen, and as he dictates, write." [held

"Brother!" said he, "the hind'rance which once The notaryt, with Guittones and myself,

Ladies, ye that con the love of love.]

Donne ch' avete intelletto d'amore.

The first verse of a can zone in our author's Vita Nuova.

† The notary.] Jacopo da Lentino, called the Notary, a poet of these times. He was probably an Apulian: for Dame, (De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. eap. 12.) quoting a verse which belongs to a canzone of his, published by the Giunti, without mentioning the writer's name, terms him one of "the illustrious Apulians," præfulgentes Apuli. See Tiraboschi. Mr. Mathias's edit. vol. i. p. 137. Cresembeni (lib. i. Della Volg. Poes. p 72, 4to ed. 1698) gives an extract from one of his poems, printed in Allacci's Collection. to show that the whimsical compositions called "Ariette," are not of modern invention.

† Guittone.] Fra Guittone, of Arezzo, holds a distinguished place in Italian literature, as, besides his poems printed in the Collection of the Giunti, he has left a collection of letters, forty in number, which afford the earliest specimen of that kind of writing in the language. They were published at Rome in 1743, with learned illustrations by Giovanni Bottari. He was also the first who gave to the sonnet it's regular and legitimate form, a species of composition in which not only his own countrymen, but many of the best poets in all the cultivated languages of modern Europe, have since so much delighted.

Short of that new and sweeter style* I hear, Is now disclos'd: I see how ye your plumes Stretch, as th' inditer guides them; which, no question.

Our's did not. He, that seeks a grace beyond, 60 Sees not the distance parts one style from other." And, as contented, here he held his peace.

Like as the birds, that winter near the Nile, In squared regiment direct their course. Then stretch themselves in file for speedier flight; Thus all the tribe of spirits, as they turn'd Their visage, faster fled, nimble alike Through leanness and desire. And as a man. Tir'd with the motion of a trotting steed, Slacks pace, and stays behind his company, Till his o'erbreathed lungs keep temperate time; E'en so Forese let that holy crew Proceed, behind them lingering at my side, And saying: "When shall I again behold thee!" "How long my life may last," said:1, "I know

not:

This know, how soon soever I return, My wishes will before me have arriv'd. Sithence the place, # where I am set to live. Is, day by day, more scoop'd of all its good; And dismal ruin seems to threaten it."

80

^{*} That new and sweeter style. 1 He means the style introduced in our Poet's time.

⁺ The birds.] Hell, canto v. 46. Euripides. Helena, 1495, and Statius. Theb. lib. v. 12.

t The place.] Florence.

"Go now," he cried: "lo! he,* whose guilt is Passes before my vision, dragg'd at heels [most, Of an infuriate beast. Toward the vale, Where guilt hath no redemption, on it speeds, Each step increasing swiftness on the last; Until a blow it strikes, that leaveth him A corse most vilely shatter'd. No long space Those wheels have yet to roll," (therewith his eyes Look'd up to heav'n) "ere thou shalt plainly see That which my words may not more plainly tell, 90 I quit thee: time is precious here: I lose Too much, thus measuring my pace with thine."

As from a troop of well rank'd chivalry,
One knight, more enterprising than the rest,
Pricks forth at gallop, eager to display
His prowess in the first encounter prov'd;
So parted he from us, with lengthen'd strides;
And left me on the way with those twain spirits,
Who were such mighty marshals of the world.

When he beyond us had so fled, mine eyes 100 No nearer reach'd him, than my thought his words;

^{*} He.] Corso Donati was suspected of aiming at the sovereignty of Florence. To escape the fury of his fellow citizens, he fled away on horseback, hut falling, was overtaken and slain, A. D. 1308. The contemporary annalist, after relating at length the circumstances of his fate, adds, "that he was one of the wisest and most valorous knights, the best speaker, the most expert statesman, the most renowned and enterprising man of his age in Italy, a comely knight and of graceful carriage, but very worldly, and in his time had formed many conspiracies in Florence, and entered into many scandalous practices for the sake of attaining state and lordship." G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. 96. The character of Corso is forcihly drawn by another of his contemporaries. Dino Compagni, lib. iii. Muratori Rer. Ital. Script, tom, ix, p. 523.

The branches of another fruit, thick hung,
And blooming fresh, appear'd. E'en as our steps
Turn'd thither; not far off, it rose to view.
Beneath it were a multitude, that rais'd
Their hands, and shouted forth I know not what
Unto the boughs; like greedy and fond brats,
That beg, and answer none obtain from him,
Of whom they beg; but more to draw them on,
He, at arm's length, the object of their wish
Above them holds aloft, and hides it not.

At length, as undeceiv'd, they went their way:
And we approach the tree, whom vows and tears
Sue to in vain; the mighty tree. "Pass on,
And come not near. Stands higher up the wood,
Whereof Eve tasted: and from it was ta'en [came.
This plant." Such sounds from midst the thickets
Whence I, with either bard, close to the side [next
That rose, pass'd forth beyond. "Remember,"
We heard, "those unblest creatures of the clouds,*
How they their twofold bosoms, overgorg'd, [120
Oppos'd in fight to Theseus: call to mind
The Hebrews,† how, effeminate, they stoop'd
To ease their thirst; whence Gideon's ranks were
thinn'd.

As he to Madian march'd adown the hills."

Thus near one border coasting, still we heard
The sins of gluttony, with woe erewhile
Reguerdon'd, Then along the lonely path,
Once more at large, full thousand paces on
We travel'd, each contemplative and mute.

130

^{*} Creatures of the clouds.] The Centaurs. Ovid Met. lib. xii. fab. 4.

[†] The Hebrews.] Judges, vii.

"Why pensive journey so ye three alone?"
Thus suddenly a voice exclaim'd: whereat
I shook, as doth a scar'd and paltry beast;
Then rais'd my head to look from whence it came.

Was ne'er, in furnace, glass, or metal, seen
So bright and glowing red, as was the shape
I now beheld. "If ye desire to mount,"
He cried; "here must ye turn. This way he goes,
Who goes in quest of peace." His countenance
Had dazzled me; and to my guides I fac'd
Backward, like one who walks as sound directs.

As when, to harbinger the dawn, springs up
On freshen'd wing the air of May, and breathes
Of fragrance, all impregn'd with herb and flowers;
E'en such a wind I felt upon my front
Blow gently, and the moving of a wing
Perceiv'd, that, moving, shed ambrosial smell;
And then a voice: "Blessed are they, whom grace
Doth so illume, that appetite in them
Exalteth no inordinate desire,

150
Still hung'ring as the rule of temperance wills."

CANTO XXV.

ARGUMENT.

Virgil and Statius resolve some doubts that have arisen in the mind of Dante from what he had just seen. They all arrive on the seventh and last cornice, where the sin of incontinence is purged in fire; and the spirits of those suffering therein are heard to record illustrious instances of chastity.

Ir was an hour, when he who climbs, had need To walk uncrippled: for the sun* had now To Taurus the meridian circle left,
And to the Scorpion left the night. As one,
That makes no pause, but presses on his road,
Whate'er betide him, if some urgent need
Impel; so enter'd we† upon our way,
One before other; for, but singly, none
That steep and narrow scale admits to climb.

* The sun.] The sun had passed the meridian two hours, and that meridian was now occupied by the constellation of Taurus, to which, as the Scorpion is opposite, the latter constellation was consequently at the meridian of night.

† So entered we.]

Davanti a me andava la mia guida: E poi io dietro per una via stretta Seguendo lei come mia scorta fida.

Frezzi, Il Quadrir. lib. ii. cap. 3.

The good prelate of Foligno has followed our Poet so closely

E'en as the young stork lifteth up his wing
Through wish to fly, yet ventures not to quit
The nest, and drops it; so in me desire
Of questioning my guide arose, and fell,
Arriving even to the act that marks
A man prepar'd for speech. Him all our haste
Restrain'd not; but thus spake the sire belov'd:
"Fear not to speed the shaft,* that on thy lip
Stands trembling for its flight." Encourag'd thus,
I straight began: "How there can leanness come,†
Where is no want of nourishment to feed?" 20

"If thou," he answer'd, "hadst remember'd thee, How Meleager‡ with the wasting brand Wasted alike, by equal fires consum'd; [thought, This would not trouble thee: and hadst thou How in the mirror's your reflected form With mimic motion vibrates; what now seems Hard, had appear'd no harder than the pulp Of summer-fruit mature. But that thy will In certainty may find its full repose, Lo Statius here! on him I call, and pray 30 That he would now be healer of thy wound."

throughout this Capitolo, that it would be necessary to transcribe almost the whole of it in order to show how much he has copied. These verses of his own may well be applied to him on the occasion.

* Fear not to speed the shaft.] "Fear not to utter the words that

are already at the tip of thy tongue."

† How there can leanness come.] "How can spirits, that need not corpore a mourishment, he subject to leanness?" This question gives rise to the following explanation of Statius respecting the formation of the human hody from the first, its junction with the soul, and the passage of the latter to another world.

† Meleager.] Virgil reminds Dante that as Meleager was wasted away by the decree of the fates, and not through want of blood; so, by the divine appointment, there may be leanness where

there is no need of nourishment.

§ In the mirror.] As the reflexion of a form in a mirror is mor

"If, in thy presence, I unfold to him The secrets of heaven's vengeance, let me plead Thine own injunction to exculpate me." So Statius answer'd, and forthwith began: "Attend my words, O son, and in thy mind Receive them; so shall they be light to clear The doubt thou offer'st. Blood, concocted well. Which by the thirsty veins is ne'er imbib'd, And rests as food superfluous, to be ta'en 40 From the replenish'd table, in the heart Derives effectual virtue, that informs The several human limbs, as being that Which passes through the veins itself to make them. Vet more concocted it descends, where shame Forbids to mention: and from thence distils In natural vessel on another's blood. There each unite together; one dispos'd To' endure, to act the other, through that power Deriv'd from whence it came; * and being met, 50 It 'gins to work, coagulating first; Then vivifies what its own substance made Consist. With animation now indued, The active virtue (differing from a plant No further, than that this is on the way, And at its limit that) continues yet To operate, that now it moves and feels, As sea sponget clinging to the rock: and there Assumes th' organic powers its seed convey'd.

dified in agreement with the modification of the form itself; so the soul, separated from the earthly body, impresses the image or ghost of that body with its own affections.

* From whence it came.] "From the heart," as Lombard

rightly interprets it.

†As sea sponge.] The fœtus is in this stage a zoophyte. Vol. XLVI. H This is the period, Son! at which the virtue, 60 That from the generating heart proceeds, Is pliant and expansive; for each limb Is in the heart by forgeful nature plann'd. How babe* of animal becomes, remains For thy consid'ring. At this point, more wise, Than thou, has err'd,† making the soul disjoin'd From passive intellect, because he saw No organ for the latter's use assign'd.

"Open thy bosom to the truth that comes.

Know, soon as in the embryo, to the brain 70

Articulation is complete, then turns
The primal Mover with a smile of joy
On such great work of nature; and imbreathes
New spirit replete with virtue, that what here
Active it finds, to its own substance draws;
And forms an individual soul, that lives,
And feels, and bends reflective on itself.
And that thou less mayst marvel at the word,
Mark the sun's heat; † how that to wine doth change,

* Babe.] By "fante," which is here rendered "babe," is meant "the human creature." "The creature that is distinguished from others by its faculty of speech," just as Homer cails men.

γενεαί μερόπων 'ανθεωπων.

+ - More wise,

Than thou has err'd.] Averroes is said to be here meant. Venturi refers to his commentary on Aristotle, De Anim. lib. iii. cap. 5. for the opinion that there is only one universal intellect or mind pervading every individual of the human race. Much of the knowledge, displayed by our Poet in the present Canto. appears to have been derived from the medical work of Averroes called the Colliget, lib. ii, f. 10. Ven. 1490. fol.

† Mark the sun's heat.] Redi and Tiraboschi (Mr. Mathias's ed. v. ii. p. 36.) have considered this as an anticipation of a profound discovery of Galileo's in natural philosophy; but it is in reality taken from a passage in Cicero "de Senecute," where-

Mix'd with the moisture filter'd through the vine. 80

"When Lachesis hath spun the thread, the soul Takes with her both the human and divine. Memory, intelligence, and will, in act Far keener than before; the other powers Inactive all and mute. No pause allow'd, In wond'rous sort self-moving, to one strand Of those, where the departed roam, she falls: Here learns her destin'd path. Soon as the place Receives her, round the plastic virtue beams, Distinct as in the living limbs before: 90 And as the air, when saturate with showers. The casual beam refracting, decks itself With many a hue; so here the ambient air Weareth that form, which influence of the soul Imprints on it: and like the flame, that where The fire moves, thither follows: so, henceforth. The new form on the spirit follows still: Hence hath it semblance, and is shadow call'd. With each sense, even to the sight, endued: Hence speech is our's, hence laughter, tears, and sighs. 100

Which thou mayst oft have witness'd on the mount. The obedient shadow fails not to present Whatever varying passion moves within us. And this the cause of what thou marvel'st at."

Now the last flexure of our way we reach'd; And to the right hand turning, other care Awaits us. Here the rocky precipice Hurls forth redundant flames; and from the rim A blast up-blown, with forcible rebuff Driveth them back, sequester'd from it's bound. 110°

speaking of the grape, he says, "quæ, et succo terra et calore solis augescens, primo est peracerba gustatu, deinde maturata dulcescit," Behov'd us, one by one, along the side,
That border'd on the void, to pass; and I
Fear'd on one hand the fire, on th' other fear'd
Headlong to fall: when thus th' instructor warn'd:
"Strict rein must in this place direct the eyes.
A little swerving and the way is lost."

Then from the bosom of the burning mass,
"O God of mercy!"* heard I sung; and felt
No less desire to turn. And when I saw
Spirits along the flame proceeding, I 120
Between their footsteps and mine own was fain
To share by turns my view. At the hymn's close
They shouted loud, "I do not know a man;"†
Then in low voice again took up the strain;
Which once more ended, "To the wood," they cried.

"Ran Dian, and drave forth Callisto‡ stung
With Cytherea's poison:" then return'd
Unto their song; then many a pair extoll'd,
Who liv'd in virtue chastely and the bands
Of wedded love. Nor from that task, I ween, 130
Surcease they; whilesoe'er the scorching fire
Enclasps them. Of such skill appliance needs,
To medicine the wound that healeth last.

^{* &}quot; O God of mercy."] "Summæ Deus clementiæ."

The beginning of the hymn sung on the Sabbath at matins, as it stands in the ancient hreviaries; for in the modern it is "summæ parens clementiæ." Lombardi.

[†] I do not know a man.] Luke, i. 34. ‡ Calisto.] See Ovid. Met. lib. ii. fab. 5.

If The votand that healeth last.] The marginal note in the Monte Casino MS. on this passage is: "idest ultima litera quæ denotat ultimum peccatum mortale;" and the editor remarks, that Dante in these last two verses admonishes himself, and in himself all those gailty of carnal sin, in what manner the wound, inflicted by it, and expressed by the last P. on his forehead, may be healed.

CANTO XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

The spirits wonder at seeing the shadow cast by the body of Dante on the flame as he passes it. This moves one of them to address him. It proves to be Guido Guinicelli, the Italian poet, who points out to him the spirit of Arnault Daniel, the Provencal, with whom he also speaks.

WHILE singly thus along the rim we walk'd, Oft the good master warn'd me: "Look thou well. Avail it that I caution thee." The sun Now all the western clime irradiate chang'd From azure tinct to white; and, as I pass'd, My passing shadow made the umber'd flame Burn ruddier. At so strange a sight I mark'd That many a spirit marvel'd on his way.

This bred occasion first to speak of me. "He seems," said they, "no insubstantial frame:" 10 Then, to obtain what certainty they might, Stretch'd tow'rds me, careful not to overpass The burning pale. "O thou! who followest The others, haply not more slow than they, But mov'd by rev'rence; answer me, who burn In thirst and fire: nor I alone, but these All for thine answer do more thirst, than doth Indian or Æthiop for the cooling stream. Tell us, how is it that thou mak'st thyself A wall against the sun, as thou not yet 20 Into th' inextricable toils of death Hadstenter'd?" Thus spake one; and I had straight

Declar'd me, if attention had not turn'd
To new appearance. Meeting these, there came,
Midway the burning path, a crowd, on whom
Earnestly gazing, from each part I view
The shadows all press forward, sev'rally
Each snatch a hasty kiss, and then away.
E'en so the emmets, 'mid their dusky troops,
Peer closely one at other, to spy out
So
Their mutual road perchance, and how they thrive.

That friendly greeting parted, ere dispatch Of the first onward step, from either tribe Loud clamour rises: those, who newly come, Shout "Sodom and Gomorrah!" these, "The cow Pasiphae enter'd, that the beast she woo'd Might rush unto her luxury." Then as cranes, That part towards the Riphæan mountains fly, Part tow'rds the Lybic sands, these to avoid The ice, and those the sun; so hasteth off 40 One crowd, advances th' other; and resume Their first song, weeping, and their several shout.*

Again drew near my side the very same,
Who had erewhile besought me; and their looks
Mark'd eagerness to listen. I, who twice
Their will had noted, spake; "O spirits! secure.
Whene'er the time may be, of peaceful end;
My limbs, nor crude, nor in mature old age,
Have I left yonder: here they bear me, fed
With blood, and sinew-strung. That I no more 50
May live in blindness, hence I tend aloft.
There is a dame on high, who wins for us
This grace, by which my mortal through your realm
I bear. But may your utmost wish soon meet

Their first song weeping, and their several shout.] See the last Canto, v. 118, and v. 123.

Such full fruition, that the orb of heaven. Fullest of love, and of most ample space, Receive you: as ye tell (upon my page Henceforth to stand recorded) who ye are; And what this multitude, that at your backs Have past behind us." As one, mountain-bred, 60 Rugged and clownish, if some city's walls He chance to enter, round him stares agape. Confounded and struck dumb; e'en such appear'd Each spirit. And when rid of that amaze. (Not long the inmate of a noble heart) He, who before had question'd, thus resum'd: "O blessed! who for death preparing, tak'st Experience of our limits, in thy bark; Their crime, who not with us proceed, was that, For which, as he did triumph, Cæsar* heard The shout of ' queen,' to taunt him. Hence their cry Of 'Sodom,' as they parted; to rebuke Themselves, and aid the burning by their shame. Our sinning was Hermaphrodite: but we. Because the law of human kind we broke, Following like beasts our vile concupiscence, Hence parting from them, to our own disgrace Record the name of her, by whom the beast In bestial tire was acted. Now our deeds Thou know'st, and how we sinn'd. If thou by name Wouldst haply know us, time permits not now To tell so much, nor can I. Of myself Learn what thou wishest. Guinicellit I; Who having truly sorrow'd ere my last, Already cleanse me." With such pious joy.

^{*} Casar.] For the opprobrium cast on Casar's effiminacy, see Suctonius. Jubias Casar.

⁺ Guinicelli.] See Note to Canto xi. 96.

As the two sons upon their mother gaz'd From sad Lycurgus* rescu'd: such my joy (Save that I more represt it) when I heard From his own lips the name of him pronounc'd, Who was a father to me, and to those My betters, who have ever us'd the sweet And pleasant rhymes of love. So nought I heard, Nor spake; but long time thoughtfully I went, Gazing on him; and, only for the fire, Approach'd not nearer. When my eyes were fed By looking on him; with such solemu pledge, As forces credence, I devoted me Unto his service wholly. In reply He thus bespake me: "What from thee I hear Is grav'd so deeply on my mind, the waves 100 Of Lethe shall not wash it off, nor make A whit less lively. But as now thy oath Has seal'd the truth, declare what cause impels That love, which both thy looks and speech bewray."

"Those dulcet lays," I answer'd; "which, as long As if our tougue the beauty does not fade, Shall make us love the very ink that trac'd them." "Brother!" he cried, and pointed at a shade

"Brother!" he cried, and pointed at a shade Refore him, "there is one, whose mother speech

The incidents are beautifully described in Statius, and seem to have made an impression on Dante, for he before (Canto xxii. 110.) characterizes Hypsipile as her—

Who show'd Langia's wave.

^{*} Lycurgus.] Statius, Theb. lib. iv. and v. Hypsipile had left her infant charge, the son of Lycurgus, on a bank, where it was destroyed by a serpent, when she went to show the Argive army the river of Langia: and, on her escaping the effects of Lycurgus's rescutment, the joy her own children felt at the sight of her was such, as our Poet felt on beholding his predecessor Guinicelli.

Doth owe to him a fairer ornament. 110 He* in love ditties, and the tales of prose. Without a rival stands; and lets the fools Talk on, who think the songster of Limogest O'ertops him. Rumour and the popular voice They look to, more than truth; and so confirm Opinion, ere by art or reason taught. Thus many of the elder time cried up Guittone, # giving him the prize, till truth By strength of numbers vanquish'd. If thou own So ample privilege, as to have gain'd Free entrance to the cloister, whereof Christ Is Abbot of the college; say to him One paternoster for me, far as needs§ For dwellers in this world, where power to sin No longer tempts us." Haply to make way. For one that follow'd next, when that was said, He vanish'd through the fire, as through the wave A fish, that glances diving to the deep.

I, to the spirit he had shown me, drew
A little onward, and besought his name,

130
For which my heart I said kept gracious room.

^{*} He.] The united testimony of Dante, and of Petrarch, places Arnault Daniel at the head of the Provençal poets. That he was born of poor but noble parents, at the castle of Ribeyrac, in Périgord, and that he was at the English court, is the amount of Millot's information concerning him (tom. ii p. 479.)

[†] The songster of Limoges.] Giraud de Borneil, of Sideuil, a castle in Limoges. He was a Troubadour, much admired and caressed in his day, and appears to have been in favour with the monarchs of Castile, Leon, Navarre, and Arragon.

[‡] Guittone.] See Canto xxiv. 56.

[§] Far as needs.] See Canto xi. 23.

He frankly thus began: "Thy courtesy*
So wins on me, I have nor power nor will
To hide me. I am Arnault; and with songs,
Sorely waymenting for my folly past,
Thorough this ford of fire I wade, and see
The day I hope for, smiling in my view.
I pray ye by the worth that guides ye up
Unto the summit of the scale, in time
Remember ye my suff'rings. With such words 140
He disappear'd in the refining flame.

^{*} Thy courtesy.] Arnault is here made to speak in his own tongue, the Provençal. According to Dante, (De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. 8.) the Provençal was one language with the Spanish.

CANTO XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

An angel sends them forward through the fire to the last ascent, which leads to the terrestrial Paradise, situated on the summit of the mountain. They have not proceeded many steps on their way upward, when the fall of night hinders them from going further; and our Poet, who has lain down with Virgil and Statius to rest, beholds, in a dream, two females, figuring the active and contemplative life. With the return of morning, they reach the height; and here Virgil gives Dante full liberty to use his own pleasure and judgment in the choice of his way, till he shall meet with Beatrice.

Now was the sun* so station'd, as when first His early radiance quivers on the heights, Where stream'd his Maker's blood; while Libra

hangs

Above Hesperian Ebro; and new fires, Meridian, flash on Ganges' yellow tide.

So day was sinking, when th' angel of God Appear'd before us. Joy was in his mien.

Forth of the flame he stood upon the brink;
And with a voice, whose lively clearness far Surpass'd our human, "Blessed† are the pure In heart," he sang: then near him as we came, "Go ye not further, holy spirits!" he cried, "Ere the fire pierce you: enter in: and list Attentive to the song ye hear from thence."

^{*} The sun.] At Jerusalem it was dawn, in Spain midnight, and in India noonday, while it was sunset in Purgatory.

+ Blessed.] Matte v. 8.

I, when I heard his saying, was as one Laid in the grave. My hands together clasp'd, And upward stretching, on the fire I look'd; And busy fancy conjur'd up the forms Erewhile beheld alive consum'd in flames.

Th' escorting spirits turn'd with gentle looks 20 Toward me; and the Mantuan spake: "My son. Here torment thou mayst feel, but canst not death. Remember thee, remember thee, if I Safe e'en on Geryon brought thee; now I come More near to God, wilt thou not trust me now? Of this be sure; though in its womb that flame A thousand years contain'd thee, from thy head No hair should perish. If thou doubt my truth. Approach; and with thy hands thy vesture's hem Stretch forth, and for thyself confirm belief. Lav now all fear, Oh! lay all fear aside. Turn hither, and come onward undismay'd."

I still, though conscience urg'd, no step advanc'd. When still he saw me fix'd and obstinate. Somewhat disturb'd he cried: "Mark now, my son,

From Beatrice thou art by this wall Divided." As at Thisbe's name the eye Of Pyramus was open'd, (when life ebb'd Fast from his veins,) and took one parting glance, While vermeil dved the mulberry; * thus I turn'd 40 To my sage guide, relenting, when I heard The name that springs for ever in my breast.

He shook his forehead; and, "How long," he said.

"Linger we now?" then smil'd, as one would smile

^{*} While vermeil dyed the mulberry.] Ovid. Metam, lib. iv. 125..

Upon a child that eyes the fruit and yields. Into the fire before me then he walk'd; And Statius, who erewhile no little space Had parted us, he pray'd to come behind.

I would have cast me into molten glass
To cool me, when I enter'd; so intense 50
Rag'd, the conflagrant mass. The sire belov'd,
To comfort me, as he proceeded, still
Of Beatrice talk'd. "Her eyes," saith he,
"E'en now I seem to view." From th'other side
A voice, that sang, did guide us; and the voice
Following, with heedful ear, we issu'd forth,
There where the path led upward. "Come," we heard,

"Come, blessed of my father." Such the sounds, That hail'd us from within a light, which shone So radiant, I could not endure the view. 60 "The sun," it added, "hastes: and evening comes. Delay not: ere the western sky is hung With blackness, strive ye for the pass." Our way Uupright within the rock arose, and fac'd Such part of heav'n, that from before my steps The beams were shrouded of the sinking sun.

Nor many stairs were overpast, when now By fading of the shadow we perceiv'd
The sun behind us couch'd; and ere one face
Of darkness o'er its measureless expanse
Involv'd th' horizon, and the night her lot
Held individual, each of us had made
A stair his pallet; not that will, but power,
Had fail'd us, by the nature of that mount
Forbidden further travel. As the goats,

* Come.] Matt. xxv. 34.

That late have skipp'd and wanton'd rapidly
Upon the craggy cliffs, ere they had ta'en
Their supper on the herb, now silent lie
And ruminate beneath the umbrage brown,
While noon-day rages; and the goatherd leans 80
Upon his staff, and leaning watches them:
And as the swain, that lodges out all night
In quiet by his flock, lest beast of prey
Disperse them: even so all three abode,
I as a goat, and as the shepherds they,
Close pent on either side by shelving rock.

A little glimpse of sky was seen above; Yet by that little I beheld the stars, In magnitude and lustre shining forth With more than wonted glory. As I lay, 90 Gazing on them, and in that fit of musing, Sleep overcame me, sleep, that bringeth oft Tidings of future hap. About the hour, As I believe, when Venus from the east First lighten'd on the mountain, she whose orb Seems alway glowing with the fire of love, A lady young and beautiful, I dream'd, Was passing o'er a lea; and, as she came, Methought I saw her ever and anon Bending to cull the flowers; and thus she sang: 100 "Know ye, whoever of my name would ask, That I am Leah: * for my brow to weave A garland, these fair hands unwearied ply.

[•] I am Leah.] By Leah is understood the active life, as Rachel figures the contemplative. Michel Angelo has made these allegorical personages the subject of two statues on the monument of Julius II. in the church of St. Pietro in Vincolo. See Mr. Duppa's Life of Michel Angelo, Sculpture viii, and x. and p. 247.

To please me* at the crystal mirror, here I dcck me. But my sister Rachel, shet Before her glass abides the livelong day, Her radiant eyes beholding, charm'd no less, Than I with this delightful task. Her joy In contemplation, as in labour mine." And now as glimm'ring dawn appear'd, that breaks More welcome to the pilgrim still, as he Sojourns less distant on his homeward way, Darkness from all sides fled, and with it fled My slumber; whence I rose, and saw my guide Already risen. "That delicious fruit, Which through so many a branch the zealous care Of mortals roams in quest of, shall this day Appease thy hunger." Such the words I heard From Virgil's lip; and never greeting heard, So pleasant as the sounds. Within me straight 120 Desire so grew upon desire to mount, Thenceforward at each step I felt the wings Increasing for my flight. When we had run O'er all the ladder to its topmost round, As there we stood, on me the Mantuan fix'd His eyes, and thus he spake: "Both fires, my son, The temporal and eternal, thou hast seen; And art arriv'd, where of itself my ken No further reaches. I, with skill and art, Thus far have drawn thee. Now thy pleasure take

For guide. Thou hast o'ercome the steeper way,

^{*} To please me.] "For the sake of that enjoyment which I shall have in beholding my God face to face, I thus exercise myself in good works."

⁺ She] "Her delight is in admiring in her mirror, that is, in the Supreme Being, the light, or knowledge, that He vouchsafes her."

O'ercome the straiter. Lo! the sun, that darts
His beam upon thy forehead: lo! the herb,
The arborets and flowers, which of itself
This land pours forth profuse. Till those bright
eyes*
[haste
With gladness come, which, weeping, made me
To succour thee, thou mayst or seat thee down,
Or wander where thou wilt. Expect no more
Sanction of warning voice or sign from me,
Free of thy own arbitrement to choose,
Discreet, judicious. To distrust thy sense
Were henceforth error. I invest thee then
With crown and mitre, sovereign o'er thyself."

[•] Those bright eyes.] The eyes of Beatrice.

CANTO XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Dante wanders through the forest of the terrestrial Paradise, till he is stopped by a stream, on the other side of which he beholds a fair lady, culling flowers. He speaks to her; and she, in reply, explains to him certain things touching the nature of that place, and tells that the water, which flows between them is here called Lethe, and in another place has the name of Eunoce.

THROUGH that celestial forest, whose thick shade
With lively greenness the new-springing day
Attemper'd, eager now to roam, and search
Its limits round, forthwith I left the bank;
Along the champain leisurely my way
Pursuing, o'er the ground, that on all sides
Delicious odour breath'd. A pleasant air,
That intermitted never, never veer'd,
Smote on my temples, gently, as a wind
Of softest influence: at which the sprays,
Obedient all, lean'd trembling to that part*
Where first the holy mountain casts his shade;
Yet were not so disorder'd, but that still
Upon their top the feather'd quiristers

feather'd quiristers

Applied their wonted art, and with full joy Welcom'd those hours of prime, and warbled shrill Amid the leaves, that to their jocund lays Kept tenor; even as from branch to branch, Along the piny forests on the shore Of Chiassi,* rolls the gath'ring melody, 20 When Eolus hath from his cavern loos'd The dripping south. Already had my steps, Though slow, so far into that ancient wood Transported me, I could not ken the place Where I had enter'd; when, behold my path Was bounded by a rill, which, to the left, With little rippling waters bent the grass That issued from its brink. On earth no wave, How clean soe'er, that would not seem to have Some mixture in itself, compar'd with this, 30 Transpicuous clear; yet darkly on it roll'd, Darkly beneath perpetual gloom, which ne'er Admits or sun or moon-light there to shine.

My feet advanc'd not; but my wond'ring eyes Pass'd onward, o'er the streamlet, to survey The tender may-bloom, flush'd through many a hue, In prodigal variety: and there,
As object, rising suddenly to view,
That from our bosom every thought beside
With the rare marvel chases, I beheld
A lady† all alone, who, singing, went,

^{*} Chiassi.] This is the wood, where the scene of Boccaccio's sublimest story (taken entirely from Elinaud, as I learn in the notes to the Decameron, Ediz Giunti, 1573, p. 62.) is laid. See Dec. G. 5. N. 8. and Dryden's Theodore and Honoria. Our Poet perhaps wandered in it during his abode with Guido Novello da Polenta.

[†] A lady.] Most of the commentators suppose, that by this lady, who in the last Canto is called Matilda, is to be understood the Counters Matilda, who endowed the holy see with the estates

And culling flower from flower, wherewith her way Was all o'er painted. "Lady beautiful! Thou, who (if looks, that use to speak the heart, Are worthy of our trust,) with love's own beam Dost warm thee," thus to her my speech I fram'd; "Ah! please thee hither tow'rds the streamlet bend Thy steps so near, that I may list thy song. Beholding thee and this fair place, methinks, I call to mind where wander'd and how look'd 50 Proserpine, in that season, when her child The mother lost, and she the bloomy spring."

As when a lady, turning in the dance,
Doth foot it featly, and advances scarce
One step before the other to the ground;
Over the yellow and vermilion flowers
Thus turn'd she at my suit, most maiden-like,
Valing her sober eyes; and came so near,
That I distinctly caught the dulcet sound.
Arriving where the limpid waters now
60
Lav'd the green swerd, her eyes she deign'd to
raise,

That shot such splendour on me, as I ween Ne'er glanc'd from Cytherea's, when her son Had sped his keenest weapon to her heart. Upon the opposite bank she stood and smil'd; As through her graceful fingers shifted still The intermingling dyes, which without seed That lofty land unbosoms. By the stream

called the Patrimony of St. Peter, and died in 1115. See G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. xx. But it seems more probable that she should be intended for an allegorical personage. Venturi accordingly supposes that she represents the active life. But, as Lombardi justly observes, we have had that already shadowed forth in the character of Leah; and he therefore suggests, that by Matilda may be understood that affection which we ought to bear towards the holy thurch, and for which the lady above mentioned was so remarkable.

Three paces only were we sunder'd: yet. The Hellespont, where Xerxes pass'd it o'er, (A curb for ever to the pride of man*) Was by Leander not more hateful held For floating, with inhospitable wave, 'Twixt Sestos and Abydos, than by me That flood, because it gave no passage thence.

"Strangers ye come; and haply in this place, That cradled human nature in its birth. Wond'ring, ye not without suspicion view My smiles: but that sweet strain of psalmody, 'Thou, Lord! hast made me glad,'t will give ye light, 80

Which may uncloud your minds. And thou, who stand'st

The foremost, and didst make thy suit to me, Say if aught else thou wish to hear: for I Came prompt to answer every doubt of thine."

She spake; and I replied: "I know not how# To reconcile this wave, and rustling sound Of forest leaves, with what I late have heard Of opposite report." She answering thus: "I will unfold the cause, whence that proceeds, [90 Which makes thee wonder; and so purge the cloud That hath enwrapt thee. The First Good, whose Is only in himself, created man, Tioy For happiness; and gave this goodly place, His pledge and earnest of eternal neace. Favour'd thus highly, through his own defect He fell; and here made short sojourn; he fell,

† I know not how.] See Canto xxi. 45.

^{*} A curb for ever to the pride of man.] Because Xerxes had been so humbled, when he was compelled to repass the Hellespont in one small bark, after having a little before crossed with a prodignous army in the hopes of subduing Greece.

† Thou, Lord! hast made me glad.] Psalm xeii. 4.

And, for the bitterness of sorrow, chang'd Laughter unblam'd and ever-new delight. That vapours none, exhal'd from earth beneath, Or from the waters, (which, wherever heat Attracts them, follow,) might ascend thus far To vex man's peaceful state, this mountain rose So high toward the heav'n, nor fears the rage Of elements contending: from that part Exempted, where the gate his limit bars. Because the circumambient air, throughout, With its first impulse circles still, unless Aught interpose to check or thwart it's course; Upon the summit, which on every side To visitation of th' impassive air 110 Is open, doth that motion strike, and makes Beneath it's sway th' umbrageous wood resound: And in the shaken plant such power resides, That it impregnates with it's efficacy The voyaging breeze, upon whose subtle plume That, wafted, flies abroad; and th' other land.* Receiving, (as 't is worthy in itself, Or in the clime, that warms it.) doth conceive: And from its womb produces many a tree Of various virtue. This when thou hast heard, 120 The marvel ceases, if in yonder earth Some plant, without apparent seed, be found To fix it's fibrous stem. And further learn.

^{*} Th' other land.] The continent, inhabited by the living, and separated from Purgatory by the ocean, is affected (and that diversely, according to the nature of the soil, or the climate) by a virtue, or efficacy, conveyed to it by the winds from plants growing in the terrestrial Paradise, which is situated on the summit of Purgatory; and this is the cause why some plants are found on earth without any apparent seed to produce them.

That with prolific foison of all seeds This holy plain is fill'd, and in itself Bears fruit that ne'er was pluck'd on other soil.

"The water, thou behold'st, springs not from vein, Restor'd by vapour, that the cold converts: As stream, that intermittently repairs And spends his pulse of life; but issues forth From fountain, solid, undecaying, sure: And, by the will, omnific, full supply Feeds whatsoe'er on either side it pours : On this, devolv'd with power to take away Remembrance of offence; on that, to bring Rememb'rance back of every good deed done. From whence it's name of Lethe on this part: On th' other, Eunoe: both of which must first Be tasted, ere it work; the last exceeding All flavours else. Albeit thy thirst may now Be well contented, if I here break off. No more revealing; yet a corollary I freely give beside: nor deem my words Less grateful to thee, if they somewhat pass The stretch of promise. They, whose verse of yore The golden age recorded and it's bliss, On the Parnassian mountain, * of this place Perhaps had dream'd. Here man was guiltless; here Perpetual spring, and every fruit; and this The far-fam'd nectar." Turning to the bards, 150 When she had ceas'd, I noted in their looks A smile at her conclusion; then my face Again directed to the lovely dame.

[.] On the Parnassian mountain. In bicipiti somniasse Parnasso.

CANTO XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

The lady, who in a following Canto is called Matilda, moves along the side of the stream in a contrary direction to the current, and Dante keeps equal pace with her on the opposite bank. A marvellous sight, preceded by music, appears in view.

Singing, as if enamour'd, she resum'd

And clos'd the song, with "Blessed they whose

sins

Are cover'd." Like the wood-nymphs then, that tripp'd

Singly across the sylvan shadows; one Eager to view, and one to 'scape the sun; So mov'd she on, against the current, up The verdant rivage. I, her mincing step Observing, with as tardy step pursued.

Between us not an hundred paces trod,
The bank, on each side bending equally,
Gave me to face the orient. Nor our way

10
Far onward brought us, when to me at once
She turn'd, and cried: "My brother! look, and
hearken."

And lo! a sudden lustre ran across
Through the great forest on all parts, so bright,
I doubted whether lightning were abroad;
But that, expiring ever in the spleen

That doth unfold it, and this during still,
And waxing still in splendour, made me question
What it might be: and a sweet melody 20
Ran through the luminous air. Then did I chide,
With warrantable zeal, the hardihood
Of our first parent; for that there, where earth
Stood in obedience to the heav'ns, she only,
Woman, the creature of an hour, endur'd not
Restraint of any veil, which had she borne
Devoutly, joys, ineffable as these,
Had from the first, and long time since, been mine.

While, through that wilderness of primy sweets
That never fade, suspense I walk'd, and yet 30
Expectant of beatitude more high;
Before us, like a blazing fire, the air
Under the green boughs glow'd; and, for a song,
Distinct the sound of melody was heard.

O ye thrice holy virgins! for your sakes
If e'er I suffer'd hunger, cold, and watching,
Occasion calls on me to crave your bounty.
Now through my breast let Helicon his stream
Pour copious, and Urania* with her choir
Arise to aid me; while the verse unfolds

40
Things, that do almost mock the grasp of thought.

Onward a space, what seem'd seven trees of gold The intervening distance to mine eye Falsely presented: but, when I was come So near them, that no lineament was lost Of those, with which a doubtful object, seen Remotely, plays on the misdeeming sense;

[•] Uranin.] Landino observes, that intending to sing of heavenly things, he rightly invokes Urania. Thus Milton:

Descend from Heav'n, Urania, by that name

If rightly thou art call'd.

P. L, b. vii. v.

Then did the faculty, that ministers
Discourse to reason, these for tapers of gold*
Distinguish; and i' the' singing trace the sound 50
"Hosanna." Above, their beauteous garniture
Flam'd with more ample lustre, than the moon
Through cloudless sky at midnight, in her noon.

I turn'd me, full of wonder, to my guide;
And he did answer with a countenance
Charg'd with no less amazement: whence my view
Reverted to those lofty things, which came
So slowly moving towards us, that the bride
Would have outstript them on her bridal day.

The lady call'd aloud: "Why thus yet burns 60 Affection in thee for these living lights, And dost not look on that which follows them?"

I straightway mark'd a tribe behind them walk, As if attendant on their leaders, cloth'd With raiment of such whiteness, as on earth Was never. On my left, the wat'ry gleam Borrow'd, and gave me back, when there I look'd, As in a mirror, my left side portray'd.

When I had chosen on the river's edge
Such station, that the distance of the stream
Alone did separate me; there I stay'd
My steps for clearer prospect, and beheld
The flames go onward, leaving, as they went,
The air behind them painted as with trail
Of liveliest pencils; so distinct were mark'd

^{*} Tapers of gold.] See Rev. i. 12. The Commentators are not agreed whether the seven sacraments of the Church, or the seven gifts of the Spirit are intended. In his Convito, our author says: "Because these gifts proceed from ineffable charity, and divine charity is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, hence, also, it is that they are called gifts of the Holy Spirit, the which, as Isaiah distinguishes them, are seven." P. 189.

All those sev'n listed colours,* whence the sun Maketh his bow, and Cynthia her zone. These streaming gonfalons did flow beyond My vision; and ten paces, + as I guess, Parted the outermost. Beneath a sky 80 So beautiful, eame four-and-twenty elders,‡ By two and two, with flower-de-luces crown'd. All sang one song: "Blessed be thous among The daughters of Adam! and thy loveliness Blessed for ever!" After that the flowers. And the fresh herblets, on the opposite brink, Were free from that elected race; as light In heav'n doth second light, came after them Four animals, each crown'd with verdurous leaf. With six wings each was plum'd; the plumage

Of eyes; and th' eyes of Argus would be such, Were they endued with life. Reader! more rhymes I will not waste in shadowing forth their form: For other need so straitens, that in this

. Listed colours.

Di sette liste tutte in quei colori, &c.

---a bow

Conspicuous with three listed colours gay.

Milton, P. L. b xi. 865.

† Ten paces.] For an explanation of the allegorical meaning of this mysterious procession. Venturi refers those "who would see in the dark," to the commentaries of Landino, Vellutello, and others; and adds, that it is evident the Poet has accommodated to his own fancy, many sacred images in the Apocalypse. In Vasari's Life of Giotto, we learn that Dante recommended that book to his friend, as affording fit subjects for his pencil.

t Four and twenty elders.] "Upon the seats I saw four and

twenty elders sitting." Rev. iv. 4.

& Blessed be thou.] "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Luke, i. 42.

! Four. The four Evangelists.

I may not give my bounty room. But read Ezekiel;* for he paints them, from the north How he beheld them come by Chebar's flood, In whirlwind, cloud, and fire; and even such As thou shalt find them character'd by him, Here were they; save as to the pennons: there, 100 From him departing, John† accords with me.

The space, surrounded by the four, enclos'd A car triumphal: on two wheels it came, Drawn at a Gryphon's neck; and he above Stretch'd either wing uplifted, 'tween the midst

*Ezekiel.] "And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

"Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.

"And every one had four faces, and every one had four wines." Exekiel. i. 4. 5. 6.

† John.] "And the four heasts had each of them six wings about him." Rev. iv. 8. "Aliter senas alas propter senarii numeri perfectionem positum arbitror; quia in sexta ætate, id est adveniente plenitudine temporum, hæc Apostolus peracta commemorat; in novissimo enim animali conclusit omnia." Primasti, Augustini discipuli, Episcopi Comment. lib. quinque in Apocal. Ed. Basil, 1544. "With this interpretation it is very consonant that Ezekiel discovered in these animals only four wings, because his prophecy does not extend heyond the fourth age, beyond that is the end of the synagogue and the calling of the Gentiles: whereas Dante beholding them in the sixth age, saw them with six wings, as did Saint John." Lombardi.

‡ A car triumphal.] Either the Christian church, or perhaps the Papal chair.

§ Gryphon.] Under the gryphon, an imaginary creature, the fore part of which is an eagle, and the hinder a lion, is shadowed forth the union of the divine and human nature in Jesus Christ.

And the three listed hues, on each side, three; So that the wings did cleave or injure none: And out of sight they rose. The members, far As he was bird, were golden: white the rest. With vermeil intervein'd. So beautiful A car, in Rome, ne'er grac'd Augustus' pomp, Or Africanus': e'en the sun's itself Were poor to this: that chariot of the sun. Erroneous, which in blazing ruin fell At Tellus' pray'r* devout, by the just doom Mysterious of all-seeing Jove. Three nymphs,† At the right wheel, came circling in smooth dance: The one so ruddy, that her form had scarce Been known within a furnace of clear flame: The next did look, as if the flesh and bones Were emerald; snow new-fallen seem'd the third. Now seem'd the white to lead, the ruddy now; And from her song who led, the others took Their measure, swift or slow. At th' other wheel, A band quaternion, + each in purple clad, Advanc'd with festal step, as, of them, one The rest conducted; one, upon whose front Three eyes were seen. In rear of all this group,

^{*} Tellus' prayer.] Ovid. Met. lib. ii. v. 279.

[†] Three nymphs.] The three evangelical virtues: the first Charity, the next Hope, and the third Faith. Faith may be produced by charity, or charity by faith, but the inducements to hope must arise either from one or other of these.

[†] A band quaternion.] The four moral or cardinal virtues, of whom Prudence directs the others.

^{6 ---} one

The rest conducted.] Prudence, described with three eyes, because she regards the past, the present, and the future.

Two old men* I beheld, dissimilar In raiment, but in port and gesture like, 130 Solid and mainly grave; of whom, the one Did show himself some favour'd counsellor Of the great Coan, thim, whom nature made To serve the costliest creature of her tribe: His fellow mark'd an obstinate intent: Bearing a sword, whose glitterance and keen edge, E'en as I view'd it with the flood between. Appall'd me. Next, four others# I beheld, Of humble seeming: and, behind them all, One single old man. & sleeping as he came, 140 With a shrewd visage. And these seven, each Like the first troop were habited; but wore No braid of lilies on their temples wreath'd. Rather, with roses and each vermeil flower.

^{*} Two old men.] Saint Luke, the physician, characterized as the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, and Saint Paul, represented with a sword, on account, as it should seem, of the power of his style.

⁺ Of the great Coan.] Hippocrates, "whom nature made for

the benefit of her favourite creature, man."

[†] Four others.] "The commentators," says Venturi, "suppose these four to be the four evangelists, but I should rather take them to be four principal doctors of the church." Yet both Landino and Vellutello expressly call them the authors of the epistles, James, Peter, John, and Jude.

[§] One single old man.] As some say, St. John, under his character of the author of the Apocalypse. But, in the poem attributed to Giacopo, the son of our Poet, which in some MSS. and in one of the earliest editions, accompanies the original of this work, and is descriptive of its plan, this old man is said to be Moses.

E'l vecchio, ch' era dietro a tutti foro,

Fu Moyse.

And the old man, who was behind them all, Was Moses.

See No. 3459 of the Harl, MSS. in the British Museum.

A sight, but little distant, might have sworn, That they were all on fire above their brow.

When as the car was o'er against me, straight Was heard a thund'ring, at whose voice it seem'd The chosen multitude were stay'd; for there, With the first ensigns, made they solemn halt. 150

CANTO XXX.

ARGUMENT.

Beatrice descends from heaven, and rebukes the Poet.

Soon as that polar light,* fair ornament Of the first heaven, which hath never known Setting nor rising, nor the shadowy veil Of other cloud than sin, to duty there Each one convoying, as that lower doth The steersman to his port, stood firmly fix'd; Forthwith the saintly tribe, who in the van Between the Gryphon and its radiance came, Did turn them to the car, as to their rest: 10 And one, as if commission'd from above, In holy chant thrice shouted forth aloud; "Come, t spouse from Libanus:" and all the rest Took up the song .- At the last audit, so The blest shall rise, from forth his cavern each Uplifting lightly his new-vested flesh; As, on the sacred litter, at the voice

† Come.] "Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me, from Lebanon," Song of Solomon, iv. 8.

^{*}The polar light.] The seven candlesticks of gold, which he calls the polar light of heaven itself, because they perform the same office for Christians that the polar star does for mariners, in guiding them to their port.

Authoritative of that elder, sprang
A hundred ministers and messengers
Of life eternal. "Blessed* thou, who eom'st!"
And, "Oh!" they eried, "from full hands seatter
ye 20

Unwith'ring lilies:" and, so saying, east Flowers over head and round them on all sides.

I have beheld, ere now, at break of day, The eastern elime all roseate; and the sky Oppos'd, one deep and beautiful serene: And the sun's face so shaded, and with mists Attemper'd, at his rising, that the eye Long while endur'd the sight: thus, in a cloud, Of flowers, that from those hands angelie rose, And down within and outside of the car Fell showering, in white veil with olive wreath'd, A virgin in my view appear'd, beneath Green mantle, rob'd in hue of living flame: Andt o'er my spirit, that so long a time Had from her presence felt no shudd'ring dread, Albeit mine eyes discern'd her not, there mov'd A hidden virtue from her, at whose touch The power of ancient love was strong within me.

No sooner on my vision streaming, smote
The heavenly influence, which, years past, and
e'en
40

In ehildhood thrill'd me, than tow'rds Virgil I Turn'd me to leftward; panting, like a babe, That flees for refuge to his mother's breast, If aught have terrified or work'd him woe:

^{*} Blessed] "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxi. 9.

⁺ And.] His spirit, which had been so long unawed by the presence of Beatrice (for she had been ten years dead,) now felt, through a secret influence proceeding from her, its ancient love revived, though his sight had not yet distinguished her.

And would have cried, "There is no dram of blood, That doth not quiver in me. The old flame Throws out clear tokens of reviving fire."

But Virgil had bereav'd us of himself;
Virgil, my best-lov'd father; Virgil, he
To whom I gave me up for safety: nor*

All our prime mother lost avail'd, to save
My undew'd cheeks from blur of soiling tears.

"Dante! weep not, that Virgil leaves thee; nay, Weep thou not yet: behoves thee feel the edge Of other sword; and thou shalt weep for that."

As to the prow or stern, some admiral
Paces the deck, inspiriting his crew,
When 'mid the sail-yards all hands ply aloof;
Thus, on the left side of the car, I saw
(Turning me at the sound of mine own name, 60
Which here I am compell'd to register)
The virgin station'd, who before appear'd
Veil'd in that festive shower angelical. [eyes;

Tow'rds me, across the stream, she bent her Though from her brow the veil descending, bound With foliage of Minerva, suffer'd not That I beheld her clearly: then with act Full royal, still insulting o'er her thrall, Added, as one who, speaking, keepeth back The bitterest saying, to conclude the speech: 70 "Observe me well. I am, in sooth, I am Beatrice. What! and hast thou deign'd at last Approach the mountain? Knewest not, O man! Thy happiness is here?" Down fell mine eyes On the clear fount; but there, myself espying, Recoil'd, and sought the greenswerd: such a weight

^{*} Nor.] "Not all the beauties of the terrestrial Paradise, in which I was, were sufficient to allay my grief."

Of shame was on my forehead. With a mien Of that stern majesty, which doth surround A mother's presence to her awe-struck child, She look'd: a flavour of such bitterness 80 Was mingled in her pity. There her words Brake off; and suddenly the angels sang, "In thee, O gracious Lord! my hope hath been:" But* went no farther than, "Thou, Lord! hast set My feet in ample room." As snow, that lies, Amidst the living rafterst on the back Of Italy, congeal'd, when drifted high And closely pil'd by rough Sclavonian blasts; Breathe but the land whereon no shadow falls, \$ And straightway melting it distils away, 90 Like a fire-wasted taper: thus was I. Without a sigh or tear, or ever these Did sing, that, with the chiming of heav'n's sphere, Still in their warbling chime: but when the strain Of dulcet symphony express'd for me Their soft compassion, more than could the words, "Virgin! why so consum'st him?" then, the ice, Congeal'd about my bosom, turn'd itself To spirit and water; and with anguish forth

† The living rafters.] "Vive travi." The leafless woods on the Apenniue.

Fraxineæque trabes.

Virg. Æn. lib. vi. 181.

and

Trabibusque obscurus acernis.

Ibid. lib. ix. 87.

^{*} But.] They sang the thirty-first Psalm, to the end of the eighth verse. What follows in that psalm would not have suited the place or the occasion.

[†] The land whereon no shadow falls.] "When the wind blows from off Africa, where, at the time of the equinox, bodies, being under the equator, east little or no shadow; o.; in other words, when the wind is south."

Gush'd, through the lips and eyelids, from the heart.

Upon the chariot's same edge still she stood, Immoveable; and thus address'd her words To those bright semblances with pity touch'd: "Ye in th' eternal day your vigils keep; So that nor night nor slumber, with close stealth, Conveys from you a single step, in all The goings on of time; thence, with more heed I shape mine answer, for his ear intended, Who there stands weeping; that the sorrow now May equal the trangression. Not alone Through operation of the mighty orbs, That mark each seed to some predestin'd aim, As with aspect or fortunate or ill The constellations meet; but through benign Largess of heav'nly graces, which rain down From such a height as mocks our vision, this man Was, in the freshness of his being,* such, So gifted virtually, that in him All better habits wond'rously had thriv'd. The more of kindly strength is in the soil, 120 So much doth evil seed and lack of culture Mar it the more, and make it run to wildness. These looks sometime upheld him; for I show'd My youthful eyes, and led him by their light In upright walking. Soon as I had reach'd The threshold of my second age, + and chang'd

Some suppose our poet alludes to the work so called, written in his youth.

^{*} In the freshness of his being.]

Nella sua vita nuova.

[†] The threshold of my second age.] In the Convito, our Poet makes a division of human life into four ages. The first of which lasts till the twenty fifth year. Beatrice, therefore, passed from this life to a better, about that period. See the Life of Dante prefixed.

My mortal for immortal; then he left me, And gave himself to others. When from flesh To spirit I had risen, and increase Of beauty and of virtue circled me, 130 I was less dear to him, and valuedless. His steps were turn'd into deceitful ways, Following false images of good, that make No promise perfect. Nor avail'd me aught To sue for inspiration, with the which, I, both in dreams of night, and otherwise, Did call him back : of them, so little reck'd him. Such depth he fell, that all device was short Of his preserving, save that he should view The children of Perdition. To this end 140 I visited the purlieus of the dead: And, one, who hath conducted him thus high, Receiv'd my supplications urg'd with weeping. It were a breaking of God's high decree. If Lethe should be past, and such food* tasted, Without the cost of some repentant tear."

^{*} Such food.] The oblivion of sins.

CANTO XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

Beatrice continues her reprehension of Dante, who confesses his error, and falls to the ground; coming to himself again, he is by Matilda drawn through the waters of Lethe, and presented first to the four virgins who figure the cardinal virtues; these in their turn lead him to the Gryphon, a symbol of our Saviour; and the three virgins, representing the evangelical virtues, intercede for him with Beatrice, that she would display to him her second beauty.

"O THOU!" her words she thus without delay Resuming, turn'd their point on me, to whom They with but lateral edge,* seem'd harsh before: "Say thou, who stand'st beyond the holy stream, If this be true. A charge, so grievous, needs Thine own avowal." On my faculty Such strange amazement hung, the voice expir'd Imperfect, ere its organs gave it birth.

A little space refraining, then 'she spake:
"What dost thou muse on? Answer me. The wave
On thy remembrance of evil yet
11
Hath done no injury." A mingled sense

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^{*} With lateral edge.] The words of Beatrice, when not addressed directly to himself, but spoken to the angel of him, Dante had thought sufficiently harsh.

Of fear and of confusion, from my lips Did such a "Yea" produce, as needed help Of vision to interpret. As when breaks, In act to be discharg'd a cross-bow bent Beyond it's pitch, both nerve and bow o'erstretch'd; The flagging weapon feebly hits the mark: Thus, tears and sighs forth gushing, did I burst Beneath the heavy load; and thus my voice 20 Was slacken'd on its way. She straight began: "When my desire invited thee to love The good, which sets a bound to our aspirings; What bar of thwarting foss or linked chain Did meet thee, that thou so should'st quit the hope Of further progress? or what bait of ease, Or promise of allurement, led thee on Elsewhere, that thou elsewhere should rather

A bitter sigh I drew, then scarce found voice
To answer; hardly to these sounds my lips 30
Gave utterance, wailing: "Thy fair looks withdrawn.

Things present, with deceitful pleasures, turn'd My steps aside." She answering spake: "Hadst thou

Been silent, or denied what thou avow'st,
Thou hadst not hid thy sin the more; such eye
Observes it. But whene'er the sinner's check
Breaks forth into the precious-streaming tears
Of self-accusing, in our court the wheel
Of justice doth run counter to the edge.
Howe'er, that thou mayst profit by thy shame 40
For errors past, and that henceforth more strength
May arm thee, when thou hear'st the Syren-voice;
Lay thou aside the motive to this grief,
And lend attentive car, while I unfold

How opposite a way my buried flesh
Should have impell'd thee. Never didst thou spy
In art or nature, aught so passing sweet,
As were the limbs that in their beauteous frame
Enclos'd me, and are scatter'd now in dust.
If swectest thing thus fail'd thee with my death, 50
What, afterward, of mortal, should thy wish
Have tempted? When thou first hadst felt the dart
Of perishable things, in my departing
For better realms, thy wing thou shouldst have
prun'd

To follow me; and never stoop'd again,
'To 'bide a second blow, for a slight girl,
Or other gaud as transient and as vain.
The new and inexperienc'd bird* awaits,
Twice it may be, or thrice, the fowler's aim;
But in the sight of one whose plumes are full,
In vain the net is spread, the arrow wing'd."

I stood, as children silent and asham'd Stand, list'ning, with their eyes upon the earth, Acknowledging their fault, and self-condemn'd. And she resum'd: "If, but to hear, thus pains thee; Raise thou thy beard, and lo! what sight shall do."

With less reluctance yields a sturdy holm,
Rent from it's fibres by a blast, that blows
From off the pole, or from Iarbas' land,†
Than I at her behest my visage rais'd;
And thus the face denoting by the beard,‡
I mark'd the secret sting her words convey'd.

^{*} Bird.] "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." Prov. i. 17.

⁺ From Iarbas' land.] The south.

[†] The beard.] "I perceived, that when she desired me to raise my beard, instead of telling me to lift up my head, a severe reflection was implied on my want of that wisdom which should accompany the age of manhood."

No sooner lifted I mine aspect up, Than I perceiv'd* those primal creatures cease Their flowery sprinkling; and mine eves beheld (Yet unassur'd and wavering in their view) Beatrice; she, who towards the mystic shape, That joins two natures in one form, had turn'd: And, even under shadow of her veil, And parted by the verdant rill that flow'd 80 Between, in loveliness she seem'd as much Her former self surpassing, as on earth All others she surpass'd. Remorseful goads Shot sudden through me. Each thing else, the more

Its love had late beguil'd me, now the more Was loathsome. On my heart so keenly smote The bitter consciousness, that on the ground O'erpower'd I fell: and what my state was then, She knows, who was the cause. When now my strength

Flow'd back, returning outward from the heart, 90 The lady, t whom alone I first had seen, I found above me. "Loose me not," she cried: "Loose not thy hold:" and lo! had dragg'd me high As to my neck into the stream: while she. Still as she drew me after, swept along, Swift as a shurtle, bounding o'er the wave.

The blessed shore approaching, then was heard So sweetly, "Tu asperges me," that I

^{*}Than I perceiv'd.] By the "primal creatures" are meant the angels, who were scattering the flowers on Beatrice,

⁺ The lady.] Matilda.

t Tu asperges me.] "Parge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Ps. li. 7. Sung by the choir, while the priest is sprinkling the people with holy water.

May not remember, much less tell the sound.

The beauteous dame, her arms expanding, clasp'd

My temples, and immerg'd me where 't was fit 101 The wave should drench me: and, thence raising up, Within the fourfold dance of lovely nymphs Presented me so lav'd: and with their arm They each did cover me. "Here are we nymphs, And in the heav'n are stars.* Or ever earth Was visited of Beatrice, we, Appointed for her handmaids, tended on her. We to her eyes will lead thee: but the light Of gladness, that is in them, well to scan, 110 Those vonder three, t of deeper ken than our's, Thy sight shall quicken." Thus began their song: And then they led me to the Gryphon's breast, Where, turn'd toward us, Beatrice stood. "Spare not thy vision. We have station'd thee Before the emeralds, + whence love, erewhile, Hath drawn his weapons on thee." As they spake, A thousand fervent wishes riveted Mine eyes upon her beaming eyes, that stood, Still fix'd toward the Gryphon, motionless. As the sun strikes a mirror, even thus Within those orbs the twyfold being shone; For ever varying, in one figure now Reflected, now in other. Reader! muse How wond'rous in my sight it seem'd, to mark A thing, albeit steadfast in itself, Yet in its imag'd semblance mutable.

Full of amaze, and joyous, while my soul

[•] And in the heav'n are stars.] See Canto i. 24.

⁺ Those yonder three.] Faith, hope, and charity.

[†] The emeralds.] The eyes of Beatrice.

Fed on the viand, whereof still desire
Grows with satiety; the other three,
With gesture that declar'd a loftier line,
Advanc'd: to their own carol, on they came
Dancing, in festive ring angelical.

"Turn, Beatrice!" was their song: "Oh! turn Thy saintly sight on this thy faithful one, Who, to behold thee, many a wearisome pace Hath measur'd. Gracious at our pray'r, vouchsafe Unveil to him thy cheeks; that he may mark Thy second beauty, now conceal'd." O splendour! O sacred light eternal! who is he, So pale with musing in Pierian shades, Or with that fount so lavishly imbued, Whose spirit should not fail him in th' essay To represent thee such as thou didst seem, When under cope of the still-chiming heaven Thou gav'st to open air thy charms reveal'd!

CANTO XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

Dante is warned not to gaze too fixedly on Beatrice. The procession moves on, accompanied by Matilda, Statius, and Dante, till they reach an exceeding lofty tree, where divers strange chances befal.

MINE eyes with such an eager coveting
Were bent to rid them of their ten years' thirst,*
No other sense was waking: and e'en they
Were fenc'd on either side from heed of aught;
So tangled, in its custom'd toils, that smile
Of saintly brightness drew me to itself:
When forcibly, toward the left, my sight
The sacred virgins turn'd; for from their lips
I heard the warning sounds: "Too fix'd a gaze!"†
Awhile my vision labour'd; as when late
Upon the o'erstrain'd eyes the sun hath smote:

* Their ten years' thirst.] Beatrice had been dead ten years, † Too fix'd a gaze:] The allegorical interpretation of Vellatello, whether it be considered as justly inferible from the text or not, conveys so useful a lesson, that it deserves our notice. "The understanding is sometimes so intently engaged in contemplating the light of divine truth in the scriptures, that it becomes dazzled, and is made less capable of attaining such knowledge, than if it had sought after it with moderation."

But soon,* to lesser object, as the view Was now recover'd, (lesser in respect To that excess of sensible, whence late I had perforce been sunder'd) on their right I mark'd that glorious army wheel, and turn. Against the sun and sev'nfold lights, their front. As when, their bucklers for protection rais'd, A well-rang'd troop, with portly banners curl'd, Wheel circling, ere the whole can change their E'en thus the goodly regiment of heav'n, [ground: Proceeding, all did pass us, erc the car Had slop'd his beam. Attendant at the wheels The damsels turn'd; and on the Gryphon mov'd The sacred burden, with a pace so smooth. No feather on him trembled. The fair dame. Who through the wave had drawn me, companied By Statius and myself, pursued the wheel, Whose orbit, rolling, mark'd a lesser arch.

Through the high wood, now void (the more her blame,

Who by the serpent was beguil'd) I pass'd,
With step in cadence to the harmony
Angelic. Onward had we mov'd, as far,
Perchance, as arrow at three several flights
Full wing'd had sped, when from her station down
Descended Beatrice. With one voice
All murmur'd "Adam;" circling next a plant!

^{*}But soon.] As soon as his sight was recovered, so as to bear the view of that glorious procession, which, splendid as it was, was yet less so than Beatrice, by whom his vision had been everpowered, &c.

⁺ A plant.] Lombardi has conjectured, with much probability, that this tree is not (as preceding commentators had supposed) merely intended to represent the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but that the Roman empire is figured by it. An engst

Despoil'd of flowers and leaf, on every bough. Its tresses,* spreading more as more they rose, [40 Were such, as 'midst their forest wilds, for height, The Indians might have gaz'd at. "Blessed thou, Gryphon!† whose beak hath never pluck'd that Pleasant to taste: for hence the appetite [tree Was warp'd to evil." Round the stately trunk Thus shouted forth the rest, to whom return'd The animal twice gender'd: "Yea; for so The generation of the just are sav'd."

And turning to the chariot-pole, to foot He drew it of the widow'd branch, and bound There, left unto the stock; whereon it grew. 50

the maxims maintained by our poet, as the same commentator observes, were these; that one monarchy had been willed by Providence, and was necessary for universal peace; and that this monarchy, hy right of justice and by the divine ordinance, belonged to the Roman people only. His Treatise de Monarchia was written indeed to inculcate these maxims, and to prove that the temporal monarchy depends immediately on God, and should be kept as distinct as possible from the authority of the pope.

• Its tresses.] " I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great," Daniel, iv. 10.

† Blessed thou,

Gryphon!] Our Saviour's submission to the Roman empire appears to be intended, and particularly his injunction, " to ren-

der unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

† There, left unto the stock.] Dante here seems, I think, to intimate what he has attempted to prove at the conclusion of the second book de Monarchià; namely, that our Saviour, hy his suffering under the sentence, not of Herod, hut of Pilate, who was the delegate of the Roman emperor, acknowledged and confirmed the supremacy of that emperor over the whole world; for if, as he argues, all mankind were become sinners through the sin of Adam, no punishment, that was inflicted hy one who had a right of jurisdiction over less than the whole human race, could have been sufficient to satisfy for the sins of all men. See note to Paradise, c. vî. 89.

As when large floods of radiance* from above Stream, with that radiance mingled, which ascends Next after setting of the scaly sign, Our plants then burgein, and each wears anew His wonted colours, ere the sun have yok'd Beneath another star his flamy steeds; Thus putting forth a hue more faint than rose, And deeper than the violet, was renew'd The plant, erewhile in all its branches bare.

Unearthly was the hymn, which then arose. 60 I understood it not, nor to the end Endur'd the harmony. Had I the skill. To pencil forth how clos'd th' unpitying eyest Slumb'ring, when Syrinx warbled, (eves that paid So dearly for their watching,) then, like painter, That with a model paints, I might design The manner of my falling into sleep. But feign who will the slumber cunningly, I pass it by to when I wak'd; and tell, How suddenly a flash of splendour rent 70 The curtain of my sleep, and one cries out, "Arise: what dost thou?" As the chosen three. On Tabor's mount, admitted to behold The blossoming of that fair tree, t whose fruit Is coveted of angels, and doth make Perpetual feast in heaven; to themselves Returning, at the word whence deeper sleeps§

^{*} When large floods of radiance.] When the sun enters into Aries, the constellation next to that of the Fish.

[†] Th' unpitying eyes.] See Ovid, Met. lib. i. 689.

[†] The blossoming of that fair tree.] Our Saviour's transfiguration. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons," Solomon's Song, ii. 3.

[§] Deeper sleeps.] The sleep of death, in the instance of the ruler of the Synagogue's daughter and of Lazarus.

Were broken, they their tribe diminish'd saw;
Both Moses and Elias gone, and chang'd
The stole their master wore: thus to myself
Returning, over me beheld I stand
The piteous one,* who, cross the stream, had

brought

My steps. "And where," all doubting, I exclaim'd, " Is Beatrice?"-" See her." she replied. " Beneath the fresh leaf, seated on its root. Behold th' associate choir, that circles her. The others, with a melody more sweet And more profound, journeying to higher realms, Upon the Gryphon tend." If there her words Were clos'd. I know not: but mine eves had now 90 Ta'en view of her, by whom all other thoughts Were barr'd admittance. On the very ground Alone she sat, as she bad there been left A guard upon the wain, which I beheld Bound to the twyform beast. The seven nymphs Did make themselves a cloister round about her; And, in their hands, upheld those lightst secure From blast septentrion and the gusty south.

"A little while thou shalt be forester here;
And citizen shalt be, for ever with me, 100
Of that true Rome, wherein Christ dwells a Roman.
To profit the misguided world, keep now
Thine eyes upon the car; and what thou seest,
Take heed thou write, returning to that place."

Thus Beatrice: at whose feet inclin'd Devout, at her behest, my thought and eyes,

The piteous one.] Matilda.

[†] Those lights.] The tapers of gold. † Of that true Rome.] Of heaven.

To that place.] To the earth.

I, as she bade, directed. Never fire,
With so swift motion, forth a stormy cloud
Leap'd downward from the welkin's farthest bound,
As I beheld the bird of Jove* descend
Down through the tree; and, as he rush'd, the rind
Disparting crush beneath him; buds much more,
And leaflets. On the car, with all his might
He struck; whence, staggering, like a ship it reel'd,
At random driv'n, to starboard now, o'ercome,
And now to larboard, by the vaulting waves.

Next, springing up into the chariot's womb, A foxt I saw, with hunger seeming pin'd Of all good food. But, for his ugly sins The saintly maid rebuking him, away 120 Scamp'ring he turn'd, fast as his hide-bound corpse Would bear him. Next, from whence before he I saw the eagle dart into the hull fcame. O' th' car, and leave it with his feathers lin'd: \$ And then a voice, like that which issues forth From heart with sorrow riv'd, did issue forth From heav'n, and, "O poor bark of mine!" it cried, "How badly art thou freighted." Then it seem'd That the earth open'd, between either wheel; And I beheld a dragons issue thence, 130 That through the chariot fix'd his forked train; And like a wasp, that draggeth back the sting,

^{*} The bird of Jove.] This, which is imitated from Ezekiel, xvii. 3, 4, is typical of the persecutions which the church sustained from the Roman emperors.

[†] A fox.] By the fox probably is represented the treachery of the heretics.

[‡] With his feathers lin'd.] In allusion to the donations made by Constantine to the church.

[§] A dragon.] Probably Mahomet; for what Lombardi offers to the contrary is far from satisfactory.

So drawing forth his baleful train, he dragg'd Part of the bottom forth; and went his way, Exulting. What remain'd, as lively turf With green herb, so did clothe itself with plumes,* Which haply had, with purpose chaste and kind, Been offer'd; and therewith were cloth'd the wheels,

Both one and other, and the beam, so quickly,
A sigh were not breath'd sooner. Thus transform'd,
The holy structure, through it's several parts, 141
Did put forth heads; † three on the beam, and one
On every side: the first like oxen horn'd;
But with a single horn upon their front,
The four. Like monster, sight hath never seen,
O'er it; methought there sat, secure as rock
On mountain's lofty top, a shameless whore,
Whose ken rov'd loosely round her. At her side,
As 't were that none might bear her off, I saw
A giant stand; and ever and anon
They mingled kisses. But, her lustful eyes
Chancing on me to wander, that fell minion

With plumes.] The increase of wealth and temporal dominion, which followed the supposed gift of Constantine.

[†] Heads.] By the seven heads, it is supposed with sufficient probability, are meant the seven capital sins: by the three with two horns, pride, anger, and avariee, injurious hoth to man himself and to his neighbour: by the four with one horn, gluttony, gloominess, concupiscence, and envy, hurtful, at least in their primary effects, chiefly to him who is guilty of them. Vellutello refers to Rev. xvii. Landino, who is followed by Lombardi, understands the seven heads to signify the seven sacraments, and the ten horns the ten commandments. Compare Hell, c. xix. 112.

[‡] O'er it.] The harlot is thought to represent the state of the church under Boniface VIII. and the giant to figure Philip IV. of France.

Scourg'd her from head to foot all o'er; then full Of jealousy, and fierce with rage, unloos'd The monster, and dragg'd on,* so far across The forest, that from me it's shades alone Shielded the harlot and the new-form'd brute.

^{*} Dragg'd on.] The removal of the Pope's residence from Rome to Avignon is pointed at.

CANTO XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

After a hymn sung, Beatrice leaves the tree, and takes with her the seven virgins, Matilda, Statius, and Dante. She then darkly predicts to our Poet some future events. Lastly, the whole band arrive at the fountain, from whence the two streams, Lethe and Eunoe, separating, flow different ways; and Matilda, at the desire of Beatrice, causes our Poet to drink of the latter stream.

"The heathen,* Lord! are come:" responsive
The trinal now, and now the virgin band [thus,
Quaternion, their sweet psalmody began,
Weeping; and Beatrice listen'd, sad
And sighing, to the song, in such a mood,
That Mary, as she stood beside the cross,
Was scarce more chang'd. But when they gave
her place

To speak, then, rising upright on her feet, She, with a colour glowing bright as fire, Did answer: "Yet a little while,† and ye Shall see me not; and, my beloved sisters! Again a little while, and ye shall see me."

10

[•] The heathen.] "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance." Psalm laxis. 1.

[†] Tet a little while.] "A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me." John, xvi. 16.

Before her then she marshal'd all the seven; And, beck'ning only, motion'd me, the dame, And that remaining sage,* to follow her.

So on she pass'd; and had not set, I ween, Her tenth step to the ground, when, with mine eyes,

Her eyes encounter'd; and with visage mild,
"So mend thy pace," she cried, "that if my words
Address thee, thou mayst still be aptly plac'd 20
To hear them." Soon as duly to her side
I now had hasten'd: "Brother!" she began,
"Why mak'st thou no attempt at questioning,
As thus we walk together!" Like to those
Who, speaking with too reverent an awe
Before their betters, draw not forth the voice
Alive unto their lips, befel me then
That I in sounds imperfect thus began:
"Lady! what I have need of, that thou know'st;
And what will suit my need." She answering
thus:

"Of fearfulness and shame, I will that thou Henceforth do rid thee; that thou speak no more, As one who dreams. Thus far be taught of me: The vessel, which thou saw'st the serpent break, Was, and is not: † let him, who hath the blame, Hope not to scare God's vengeance with a sop. ‡

^{*} That remaining sage.] Statius.

[†] Was, and is not.] "The beast that was, and is not." Rev. xvii. 11.

[†] Hope not to scare God's vengeance with a sop.—" Let not him who hath occasioned the destruction of the church, that vessel which the serpent brake, hope to appease the anger of the Deity by any outward acts of religious, or rather superstitious ceremony: such as was that, in our Poet's time, performed by a murderer at Florence, who imagined himself secure from vengeance, if he ate a sop of bread in wine upon the grave of the person murdered, within the space of nine days."

Without an heir for ever shall not be That eagle,* he, who left the chariot plum'd, Which monster made it first and next a prev. Plainly I view, and therefore speak, the stars E'en now approaching, whose conjunction, free From all impediment and bar, brings on A season, in the which, one sent from God, (Five hundred, five, and ten, do mark him out) That foul one, and th' accomplice of her guilt, The giant, both, shall slav. And if perchance My saying, dark as Themis or as Sphinx, Fail to persuade thee, (since like them it foils The intellect with blindness) vet erelong Events shall be the Naïads,† that will solve 50 This knotty riddle; and no damage light On flock or field. Take heed; and as these words By me are utter'd, teach them even so To those who live that life, which is a race

† The Naïads.] Dante, it is observed, has been led into a mistake by a corruption in the text of Ovid's Metam. I. vii. 757, where he found—

Carmina Naïades non intellecta priorum Solvunt..

instead of

Carmina Laïades non intellecta priorum Solverat.

as it has been since corrected by Heinsius.

Lombardi, after Rosa Morando, questions the propriety of this emendation, and refers to Pausanias, where "the Nymphs" are spoken of as expounders of oracles, for a vindication of the poet's accuracy.

^{*} That eagle.] He prognosticates that the Emperor of Germany will not always continue to submit to the usurpations of the Pope, and fortels the coming of Henry VII. Duke of Luxemburgh, signified by the numerical figures DVX, or, as Lombardi supposes, of Can Grande della Scala, appointed the leader of the Ghihelline forces. It is unnecessary to point out the imitation of the Apocalypse in the manner of this prophecy.

To death: and when thou writ'st them, keep in mind

Not to conceal how thou hast seen the plant,
That twice* hath now been spoil'd. This whose
robs,

This whoso plucks, with blasphemy of deed
Sins against God, who for his use alone
Creating hallow'd it. For taste of this,
In pain and in desire five thousand years†
And upward, the first soul did yearn for him
Who punish'd in himself the fatal gust.

"Thy reason slumbers, if it deem this height,
And summit thus inverted,‡ of the plant,
Without due cause: and were not vainer thoughts,
As Elsa's numbing waters,§ to thy soul,
And their fond pleasures had not dyed it dark
As Pyramus the mulberry; thou hadst seen,
In such momentous circumstance alone,
70
God's equal justice morally implied
In the forbidden tree. But since I mark thee,
In understanding, harden'd into stone,

* Traice.] First by the eagle, and next hy the giant. See the last Canto, v. 130, and v. 154.

† Five thrusand years.] That such was the opinion of the church, Lombardi shows by a reference to Baronius. Martyr. Rom. Dec. 25. Anno a creatione mundi, quando a principio creavit Deus cœlum et terram, quinquies millesimo centesimo nonagesimo—Jesus Christus—conceptus. Edit. Col. Agripp, 4to. 1610. p. 858.

‡ Inverted.] The branches, unlike those of other trees, spreading more widely the higher they rose. See the last Canto, v. 39.

§ Elsa's numbing waters.] The Elsa, a little stream, which flows into the Arno about twenty miles below Florence, is said to possess a petrifying quality.

| Thou hadst seen.] This is obscure. But it would seem as if he meant to inculcate his favourite doctrine of the inviolability of the empire, and of the care taken by Providence to protect it.

And, to that hardness, spotted too and stain'd. So that thine eve is dazzled at my word; I will, that, if not written, vet at least Painted thou take it in thee, for the cause, That one brings home his staff in wreath'd with palm."*

I thus: " As wax by seal, that changeth not Its impress, now is stamp'd my brain by thee. But wherefore soars thy wish'd-for speech so high Beyond my sight, that loses it the more. The more it strains to reach it?"-" To the end That thou mayst know," she answer'd straight, "the school.

That thou hast follow'd; and how far behind, When following my discourse, its learning halts: And mayst behold your art, from the divine As distant, as the disagreement is 'Twixt earth and heav'n's most high and rapturous

orb."

Che si reca 'l bordon di palma cinto.

"It is to be understood," says our Poet in the Vita Nuova, " that people, who go on the service of the Most High, are probahly named in three ways. They are named palmers, inasmuch as they go beyond sea, from whence they often bring back the palm. Inasmuch as they go to the house of Galicia, they are called pilgrims; because the sepulchre of St. James was further from his country than that of any other Apostle. They are called Romei," (for which I know of no other word we have in English except Roamers.) "inasmuch as they go to Rome." p. 275.

† Mayst behold your art.] The second persons, singular and plural, are here used intentionally by our author, the one referring to himself alone, the second to mankind in general. Compare Hell, xi. 107.

That one brings home his staff inwreath'd with palm. I "For the same cause that the palmer, returning from Palestine, brings home his staff, or hourdon, bound with palm," that is, to show where he has been.

"I not remember," I replied, "that e'er I was estrang'd from thee; nor for such fault Doth conscience chide me." Smiling she return'd: "If thou canst not remember, call to mind How lately thou hast drunk of Lethe's wave : And, sure as smoke doth indicate a flame. In that forgetfulness itself conclude Blame from thy alienated will incurr'd. From henceforth, verily, my words shall be As naked, as will suit them to appear In thy unpractis'd view." More sparkling now, 100 And with retarded course, the sun possess'd The circle of mid-day, that varies still As th' aspect varies of each several clime; When, as one, sent in vaward of a troop For escort, pauses, if perchance he spy Vestige of somewhat strange and rare; so paus'd* The sev'nfold band, arriving at the verge Of a dun umbrage hoar, such as is seen, Beneath green leaves and gloomy branches, oft To overbrow a bleak and alpine cliff. 110 And, where they stood, before them, as it seem'd, I, Tigris and Euphratest both, beheld Forth from one fountain issue; and, like friends. Linger at parting. "O enlight'ning beam! O glory of our kind! besecch thee say What water this, which, from one source deriv'd, Itself removes to distance from itself?"

^{*} Safraus'd.] Lombardi imagines that the seven nymphs, who represent the four cardinal and the three evangelical virtues, are made to stop at the verge of the shade, because retirement is the friend of every virtuous quality and spiritual gift.

† I, Tigris and Euphrates.

Tigris et Euphrates uno se fonte resolvunt.

Boetius de Consol. Philosoph. lib. v. Metr. 1.

To such entreaty answer thus was made: "Entreat Matilda, that she teach thee this,"

And here, as one who clears himself of blame 120 Imputed, the fair dame return'd: "Of me He this and more bath learnt: and I am safe That Lethe's water hath not hid it from him."

And Beatrice: "Some more pressing care. That of the memory 'reaves, perchance hath made His mind's eye dark. But lo, where Eunoe flows! Lead thither; and, as thou art wont, revive His fainting virtue." As a courteous spirit, That proffers no excuses, but as soon As he hath token of another's will. 130 Makes it his own: when she had ta'en me, thus The lovely maiden mov'd her on, and call'd To Statius, with an air most lady-like : "Come thou with him." Were further space al-

low'd.

Then, Reader! might I sing, though but in part, That beverage, with whose sweetness I had ne'er Been sated. But, since all the leaves are full. Appointed for this second strain, mine art With warning bridle checks me. I return'd From the most holy wave, regenerate, 140 E'en as new plants renew'd with foliage new. Pure and made apt for mounting to the stars.



THE

VISION OF DANTE.

PARADISE.



PARADISE.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

The Poet ascends with Beatrice towards the first heaven; and is, by her, resolved of certain doubts which arise in his mind.

His glory, by whose might all things are mov'd, Pierces the universe, and in one part
Sheds more resplendence, elsewhere less. In heav'n, That largeliest of his light partakes, was I,
Witness of things, which, to relate again,
Surpasseth power of him who comes from thence;
For that, so near approaching its desire,
Our intellect is to such depth absorb'd,
That memory cannot follow. Nathless all,
That in my thoughts I of that sacred realm
Could store, shall now be matter of my song.

10

Benign Apollo! this last labour aid; And make me such a vessel of thy worth, As thy own laurel claims, of me belov'd. Thus far* bath one of steep Parnassus' brows Suffic'd me; henceforth, there is need of both For my remaining enterprize. Do thout

^{*} Thus far.] He appears to mean nothing more than that this part of his poem will require a greater exertion of his powers than the former.

[†] Do thou.] Make me thine instrument; and, through me, utter such sound as when thou didst contend with Marsyas.

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Canto I.

Enter into my bosom, and there breathe So, as when Marsyas* by thy hand was dragg'd Forth from his limbs, unsheath'd. O power divine! 20 If thou to me of thine impart so much. That of that happy realm the shadow'd form Trac'd in my thoughts I may set forth to view; Thou shalt behold me of thy favour'd tree Come to the foot, and crown myself with leaves: For to that honour thou, and my high theme Will fit me. If but seldom, mighty Sire! To grace his triumph, gathers thence a wreath Cæsar, or bard, (more shame for human wills Depray'd) joy to the Delphic god must spring SQ From the Peneian foliage, when one breast Is with such thirst inspir'd. From a small spark Great flame hath risen: after me, perchance, Others with better voice may pray, and gain, From the Cyrrhæan city, answer kind.

Through divers passages, the world's bright lamp
Rises to mortals; but, through that which joins
Four circles with the threefold cross, in best
Course, and in happiest constellation; set,
He comes; and, to the worldly wax, best gives

40
Its temper and impression. Morning there,

* Marsyas.] Ovid. Met. lih. vi. fab. 7. Compare Boccaccio. II Filocopo. lih. v. p. 25. v. ii. Ediz. Fir. 1723. "Egli nel mio petto entri," &c..—"May he enter my bosom, and let my voice sound like his own, when he made that daring mortal deserve to come forth unsheathed from his limbs."

†Through that.] "Where the four circles, the horizon, the zodiac, the equator, and the equinoctial colure join; the last three intersecting each other so as to form three crosses, as may be seen in the armiliary sphere."

‡ In happiest constellation.] Aries. Some understand the planet

Venus by the "miglior stella."

|| Morning there.] It was morning where he then was, [and about eventiale on the earth.

Here eve was well nigh by such passage made; And whiteness had o'erspread that hemisphere. Blackness the other part; when to the left* I saw Beatrice turn'd, and on the sun Gazing, as never cagle fix'd his ken. As from the first a second beamt is wont To issue, and reflected upwards rise, E'en as a pilgrim bent on his return; So of her act, that through the eyesight pass'd 50 Into my fancy, mine was form'd: and straight. Beyond our mortal wont, I fix'd mine eyes Upon the sun. Much is allow'd us there, That here exceeds our pow'r; thanks to the place Madet for the dwelling of the human kind. I suffer'd it not long; and yet so long, That I beheld it bick'ring sparks around.

I suffer'd it not long; and yet so long,
That I beheld it bick'ring sparks around,
As iron that comes boiling from the fire. ||
And suddenly upon the day appear'd
A day new-ris'n; as he, who bath the power,
Had with another sun bedeck'd the sky.

Her eyes fast fix'd on the eternal wheels, I Beatrice stood unmov'd; and I with ken Fix'd upon her, from upward gaze remov'd, At her aspect, such inwardly became

^{*} To the left.] Being in the opposite hemisphere to ours, Beatrice, that she may he hold the rising sun, turns herself to the left.

[†] As from the first a second beam.] "Like a reflected sun beam," which he compares to a pilgrim hastening homewards.

[†] Made.] And therefore hest adapted, says Venturi, to the good temperament and vigour of the human body and its faculties. The Poet speaks of the terrestrial paradise where he then was.

 $[\]parallel$ Asiron that comes boiling from the fire.] Ardentem, et scintillas emittentem, ac si ferrum cum de fornace trahitur. Alberici Visio, § 5. This simile is repeated, § 16.

I Eternal wheels.] The heavens, eternal, and always circling.

80

90

As Glaucus,* when he tasted of the herb
That made him peer among the ocean gods:
Words may not tell of that transhuman change;
And therefore let the example serve, though weak,
For those whom grace hath better proof in store.

If I were only what thou didst create,
Then newly, Love! by whom the heav'n is rul'd;
Thou know'st, who by thy light didst bear me up.
When as the wheel which thou dost ever guide,
Desired Spirit! with its harmony,
Temper'd of thee and measur'd, charm'd mine ear;
Then seem'd to me so much of heav'n‡ to blaze
With the sun's flame, that rain or flood ne'er made
A take so broad. The newness of the sound,
And that great light, inflam'd me with desire,
Keener than e'er was felt, to know their cause.

Whence she, who saw me, clearly as myself,
To calm my troubled mind, before I ask'd,
Open'd her lips, and gracious thus began:
"With false imagination thou thyself
Mak'st dull; so that thou seest not the thing,
Which thou hadst seen, had that been shaken off.
Thou art not on the earth as thou believ'st;
For lightning, scap'd from its own proper place,
Ne'er ran, as thou hast hither now return'd."

Although devested of my first-rais'd doubt By those brief words accompanied with smiles, Yet in new doubt was I entangled more, And said: "Already satisfied, I rest From admiration deep; but now admire

^{*} As Glaucus.] Ovid. Met. lib. xiii. fab. 9.

⁺ If.] "Thou, O divine Spirit, knowest whither I had not risen above my human nature, and were not merely such as thou hadst then formed me."

[‡] So much of heav'n.] The sphere of fire, as Lombardi well explains it.

How I above those lighter bodies rise." Whence, after ult'rance of a pitcous sigh, She tow'rds me bent her eyes, with such a look, As on her frenzied child a mother casts: Then thus began: "Among themselves all things Have order; and from hence the form,* which makes The universe resemble God. In this The higher creatures see the printed steps Of that eternal worth, which is the end Whither the line is drawn, † All nature's lean, In this their order, diversly; some more, Some less approaching to their primal source. Thus they to different havens are mov'd on Through the vast sea of heing, and each one With instinct giv'n, that hears it in its course: 110 This to the lunar sphere directs the fire: This moves the hearts of mortal animals: This the brute earth together knits, and hinds. Nor only creatures, void of intellect, Are aim'd at hy this bow; but even those. That have intelligence and love, are piere'd. That Providence, who so well orders all. With her own light makes ever calm the heaven, t In which the substance, that hath greatest speed, Is turn'd: and thither now, as to our seat 120 Predestin'd, we are carried by the force Of that strong cord, that never looses dart But at fair aim and glad, Yet is it true,

^{*} From hence the form.] This order it is, that gives to the universe the form of unity, and therefore of resemblance to God.

[†] Whither the line is drawn.] All things, as they have their beginning from the Supreme Being, so are they referred to Him again.

[†] The heaven.] The empyrean, which is always motionless. The substance, that hath greatest speed.] The primum mobiles

That as, oft-times, but ill accords the form
To the design of art, through sluggishness*
Of unreplying matter; so this course†
Is sometimes quitted by the creature, who
Hath power, directed thus, to bend elsewhere;
As from a cloud the fire is seen to fall,
From its original impulse warp'd, to earth,
By vitious fondness. Thou no more admire
Thy soaring, (if I rightly deem,) than lapse
Of torrent downwards from a mountain's height.
There would in thee for wonder be more cause,
If, free of bind'rance, thou hadst stay'd below,
As living fire unmov'd upon the earth."
So said, she turn'd toward the heav'n her face.

* Through sluggishness.]

Perch' a risponder la materia e sorda.

So Filicaja. canz. vi. st. 9.

Perche a risponder la discordia e sorda.

"The workman hath in his heart a purpose, he carrieth in mind the whole form which his work should have; there wanteth not in him skill and desire to bring his labour to the best effect; only the matter, which he hath to work on, is unframable." Hooker's Eccl. Polity. b. v. § 9.

† This course.] Some beings, abusing the liberty given them by God, are repugnant to the order established by Him.

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.

Dante and his celestial guide enter the moon. The cause of the spots or shadows, which appear in that body, is explained to him.

ALL ye, who in small bark have following sail'd, Eager to listen, on the' advent'rous track Of my proud keel, that singing cuts its way, Backward return with speed, and your own shores Revisit; nor put out to open sea, Where losing me, perchance ye may remain Bewilder'd in deep maze. The way I pass, Ne'er yet was run: Minerva breathes the gale; Apollo guides me; and another Nine, To my rapt sight, the arctic beams reveal. Ye other few, who have outstretch'd the neck Timely for food of angels, on which here They live, yet never know satiety; Through the deep brine ye fearless may put out Your vessel; marking well the furrow broad Before you in the wave, that on both sides Equal returns Those, glorious, who pass'd o'er To Colchos, wonder'd not as ye will do, When they saw Jason following the plough.

10

The increate perpetual thirst,* that draws Toward the realm of God's own form, borc us Swift almost as the heaven ye behold. 20

Beatrice upward gaz'd, and I on her;
And in such space as on the notch a dart
Is plac'd, then loosen'd flies, I saw myself
Arriv'd, where wond'rous thing engag'd my sight.
Whence she, to whom no care of mine was hid,
Turning to me, with aspect glad as fair,
Bespake me: "Gratefully direct thy mind
To God, through whom to this first start we come,"

Meseem'd as if a cloud had cover'd us,
Translucent, solid, firm, and polish'd bright,
Like adamant, which the sun's beam had smit.
Within itself the ever-during pearl
Receiv'd us: as the wave a ray of light
Receives, and rests unbroken. If I then
Was of corporeal frame, and it transcend
Our weaker thought, how one dimension thus
Another could endure, which needs must be
If body enter body; how which needs must be
If body enter body; how which needs
Must the desire inflame us to behold
That essence, which discovers hy what means
God and our nature join'd! There will he seen
That, which we hold through faith; not shown by proof,
But in itself intelligibly plain,

C'en as the truth; that man at first believes. I answer'd: "Lady! I with thoughts devout, Such as I best can frame, give thanks to him, Who hath remov'd me from the mortal world. But tell, I pray thee, whence the gloomy spots

50

^{*} The increase perpetual thirst.] The desire of celestial beatitude, natural to the soul.

⁺ This first star.] The moon.

[#] E'en as the truth.] " Like a truth; that does not need demonstration, but is self-evident."

Upon this body, which below on earth Give rise to talk of Cain* in fahling quaint?"

She somewhat smil'd, then spake: "If mortals err In their opinion, when the key of sense Unlocks not, surely wonder's weapon keen Ought not to pierce thee: since thou find'st, the wings Of reason to pursue the senses' flight Are short. But what thy own thought is, declare."

Then 1: " What various here above appears,

Is caus'd, I deem, by bodies dense or rare."t 60

She then resum'd: "Thou certainly wilt see In falsehood thy belief o'erwhelm'd, if well Thou listen to the arguments which I Shall bring to face it. The eighth sphere displays Numberless lights, the which, in kind and size, May be remark'd of different aspects: If rare or dense of that were cause alone, One single virtue then would be in all. Alike distributed, or more, or less Different virtues needs must be the fruits Of formal principles; and these, save onc, § Will by thy reasoning be destroy'd. Beside.

* Cain.] Compare Hell, canto xx. 123, and Note.

⁺ By bodies dense or rare.] Lombardi observes, that the opinion respecting the spots in the moon, which Dante represents himself as here yielding to the arguments of Beatrice, is professed by our author in the Convico, so that we may conclude that work to have been composed before the Divina Commedia. "The shadow in the moon is nothing else but the rarity of its hody, which hinders the rays of the sun from terminating and being reflected, as in other parts of it." p. 70.

t Numberless lights. The fixed stars, which differ both in bulk and splendor.

[§] Save one.] " Except that principle of rarity and denseness which thou hast assigned." By "formal principles," principle formali, are meant "constituent or essential causes."

Cardo II.

If rarity were of that dusk the cause. Which thou inquirest, either in some part That planet must throughout be void, nor fed With its own matter; or, as bodies share Their fat aud leanness, in like manner this Must in its volume change the leaves.* The first. If it were true, had through the sun's eelipse Been manifested, by transparency 80 Of light, as through aught rare beside effus'd. But this is not. Therefore remains to see The other cause: and, if the other fall, Erroneous so must prove what seem'd to thee. If not from side to side this rarity Pass through, there needs must be a limit, whence Its contrary no farther lets it pass. And hence the beam, that from without proceeds, Must be pour'd back; as colour comes, through glass Reflected, which behind it lead conceals. 90 Now wilt thou say, that there of murkier hue, Than, in the other part, the ray is shown, By being thence refracted farther back. From this perplexity will free thee soon Experience, if thereof thou trial make, The fountain whence your arts derive their streams, Three mirrors shalt thou take, and two remove From thee alike; and more remote the third. Betwixt the former pair, shall meet thine eyes: Then turn'd towards them, cause behind thy back 100 A light to stand, that on the three shall shine. And thus reflected come to thee from all. Though that, beheld most distant, do not stretch A space so ample, yet in brigtness thou

^{*} Change the leaves.] Would, like leaves of parchment, be darker in some part than others.

Wilt own it equalling the rest. But now, As under snow the ground, if the warm ray Smites it, remains dismantled of the hue And cold, that cover'd it hefore; so thee, Dismantled in thy mind, I will inform With light so lively, that the tremulous heam 110 Shall quiver where it falls. Within the heaven,* Where peace divine inhabits, circles round A hody, in whose virtue lies the being Of all that it contains. The following heaven, That hath so many lights, this being divides, Through different essences, from it distinct, And yet contain'd within it. The other orbs Their separate distinctions variously Dispose, for their own seed and produce apt. Thus do these organs of the world proceed, 120 As thou beholdest now, from step to step; Their influences from above deriving, And thence transmitting downwards. Mark me well; How through this passage to the truth I ford, The truth thou lov'st; that thou henceforth alone, May'st know to keep the shallows, safe, untold.

"The virtue, and motion of the sacred orbs,
As mallet by the workman's hand, must needs
By blessed movers† be inspir'd. This heaven,‡
Made beauteous by so many luminaries,
130
From the deep spirit, || that moves its circling sphere,

^{*} Within the heaven.] According to our Poet's system, there are ten heavens. The heaven, "where peace divine inhabits," is the empyrean; the body within it, that "circles round" is the primum mobile; "the following heaven," that of the fixed stars; and "the other orbs," the seven lower heavens, are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.

[†] By blessed movers.] By angels. † This heaven.] The heaven of fixed stars. ¶ The deep spirit.] The moving angel.

Its image takes and impress as a seal: And as the soul, that dwells within your dust, Through members different, yet together form'd, In different pow'rs resolves itself; e'en so The intellectual efficacy, unfolds Its goodness multiplied throughout the stars; On its own unity revolving still. Different virtue compact different Makes with the precious hody it enlivens, 140 With which it knits, as life in you is knit. From its original nature full of joy, The virtue mingled* through the body shines. As joy through pupil of the living eye. From hence proceeds that which from light to light Seems different, and not from dense or rare. This is the formal cause, that generates, Proportion'd to its power, the dusk or clear."

^{*} The virtue mingled.] Virg. Æn.lib. vi. 724. Principio eœlum, &c.

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

In the moon Dante meets with Picarda, the sister of Forese, who tells him that this planet is allotted to those, who, after having made profession of chastity and a religious life, had been compelled to violate their vows; and she then points out to him the spirit of the Empress Costanza.

That sun,* which erst with love my bosom warm'd, Had of fair truth unveil'd the sweet aspect, By proof of right, and of the false reproof; And I, to own myself convinc'd and free. Of doubt, as much as needed, rais'd my head Erect for speech. But soon a sight appear'd, Which, so intent to mark it, held me fix'd, That of confession I no longer thought.

As through translucent and smooth glass, or wave
Clear and unmov'd, and flowing not so deep 10
As that its bed is dark, the shape returns
So faint of our impictur'd lineaments,
That, on white forehead sct, a pearl as strong
Comes to the eye; such saw I many a face,
All stretch'd to speak; from whence I straight concciv'd

* That sun.] Beatrice.

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Delusion* opposite to that, which rais'd, Between the man and fountain, amorous flame.

Sudden, as I perceiv'd them, decming these Reflected semblances, to see of whom They were. I turn'd mine eyes, and nothing saw; 20 Then turn'd them back, directed on the light Of my sweet guide, who, smiling, shot forth heams From her celestial eyes. "Wonder not thou." She cry'd, "at this my smiling, when I see Thy childish judgment; since not yet on truth It rests the foot, but, as it still is wont, Makes these fall back in unsound vacancy. Truc substances are these, which thou behold'st, Hither through failure of their vow exil'd. But speak thou with them; listen, and believe, 30 That the true light, which fills them with desire. Permits not from its heams their feet to stray."

Straight to the shadow, which for converse seem'd Most earnest, I addressed me; and began, As one by over-eagerness perplex'd; "O spirit, born for joy! who in the rays Of life eternal, of that sweetness know'st The flavour, which, not tasted, passes far All apprehension; me it well would please, If thou wouldst tell me of thy name, and this 40 Your station here." Whence she, with kindness prompt, And eyes glist'ring with smiles. "Our charity, To any wish hy justice introduc'd, Bars not the door; no more than she above, Who would have all her court be like herself.

^{*} Delusion.] "An error the contrary to that of Narcissus; because he mistook a shadow for a substance; I, a substance for a shadow."

I was a virgin sister in the earth:
And if thy mind observe me well, this form,
With such addition grac'd of loveliness,
Will not conceal me long; but thou wilt know
Piccarda,* in the tardiest sphere thus plac'd,
Here 'mid these other blessed also blest.
Our hearts, whose high affections burn alone
With pleasure from the Holy Spirit conceiv'd,
Admitted to his order, dwell in joy.
And this condition, which appears so low,
Is for this cause assign'd us, that our vows
Were, in some part, neglected and made void."

Whence I to her replied: "Something divine Beams in your countenances wond'rous fair; From former knowledge quite transmuting you. Therefore to recollect was I so slow.

But what thou sayst hath to my memory Given now such aid, that to retrace your forms Is easier. Yet inform me, ye, who here Are happy: long ye for a higher place, More to behold, and more in love to dwell?"

She with those other spirits gently smil'd;
Then answer'd with such gladness, that she scem'd
With love's first flame to glow: "Brother! our will
Is, in composure, settled by the power
Of charity, who makes us will alone
What we possess, and nought beyond desire:
If we should wish to be exalted more,
Then must our wishes jar with the high will
Of him, who sets us here; which in these orbs
Thou wilt confess not possible, if here
To be in charity must needs befal,

^{*} Piccarda] The sister of Corso Donati, and of Forese whom we have seen in the Purgatory, canto xxiii.

And if her nature well thou contemplate.

Rather it is inherent in this state?

Of blessedness, to keep ourselves within 80

The divine will, by which our wills with his
Are one. So that as we, from step to step,
Are plac'd throughout this kingdom, pleases all,
E'en as our King, who io us plaots his will;
And in his will is our tranquillity:
It is the mighty ocean, whither tends
Whatever it creates and nature makes."

Then saw I clearly how each spot in heav'n Is Paradise, though with like gracious dew The supreme virtue show'r not over all.

But as it chances, if one sort of food Hath satiated, and of another still The appetite remains, that this is ask'd, And thanks for that return'd; e'en so did I, In word and motion, bent from her to learn What web it was,* through which she had not drawn The shuttle to its point. She thus began: " Exalted worth and perfectness of life The Lady't higher up inshrine in heaven, By whose pure laws upon your nether earth 100 The robe and veil they wear; to that intent, That e'en till death they may keep watch, or sleep, With their great bridegroom, who accepts each vow, Which to his gracious pleasure love conforms, I from the world, to follow her, when young

^{*} What web it was.] "What vow of religious life it was that she had been hindered from completing, had been compelled to break."

[†] The Lady. The Clare, the foundress of the order, called after her. She was born of opulent and noble parents at Assisi, in 1193, and died in 1253. See Biogr. Univ. t. i. p. 598, 8vo. Paris, 1813.

Escap'd; and, in her vesture mantling me, Made promise of the way her sect enjoins. Thereafter men, for ill than good more apt, Forth snatch'd me from the pleasant cloister's pale. God knows* how, after that, my life was fram'd. 116 This other splendid shape, which thou beholdst At my right side, burning with all the light Of this our orb, what of myself I tell May to herself apply. From her, like me A sister, with like violence were torn The saintly folds, that shaded her fair brows. E'en when she to the world again was brought In spite of her own will and better wont. Yet not for that the bosom's inward veil Did she renounce. This is the luminary Of mighty Constance, t who from that loud blast,

120

* God knows. Rodolfo da Tossignano, Hist. Serapb. Relig. P. i. p. 138, as cited by Lombardi, relates the following legend of Piccarda.-" Her brother Corso, inflamed with rage against his virgin sister, having joined with him Farinata, an infamous assassin, and twelve other abandoned ruffians, entered the monastery by a ladder, and carried away his sister forcibly to his own house; and then tearing off her religious babit, compelled her to go in a secular garment to her nuptials. Before the spouse of Christ came together with her new husband, she knelt down before a crucifix and recommended her virginity to Christ. Soon after her whole body was smitten with leprosy, so as to strike erief and borror into the beholders; and thus in a few days, through the divine disposal, she passed with a palm of virginity to the Lord." Perhaps, adds the worthy Franciscan, our Poet not being able to certify himself entirely of this occurrence, has chosen to pass it over discreetly, by making Piccarda say-God knows bow after that, my life was franid.

† Constance.] Daughter of Ruggieri, king of Sicily, who being taken by force out of a monastery where she had professed, was married to the Emperor Henry VI. and by him was mother to Frederick II. She was fifty years old or more at the time, and

Which blow the second* over Suabia's realm,
That power produc'd, which was the third and last."
She ceas'd from further talk, and then began
"Ave Maria" singing; and with that song
Vanish'd, as heavy substance through deep wave.
Mine eye, that, far as it was capable,
Pursu'd her, when in dimness she was lost,
Turn'd to the mark where greater want impell'd,
And bent on Beatrice all its gaze,
But she, as lightning, beam'd upon my looks;
So that the sight sustain'd it not at first.
Whence I to question her became less prompt.

"because it was not credited that she could have a child at that age, she was delivered in a pavilion, and it was given out that any lady, who pleased, was at liberty to see her. Many came, and saw her; and the suspici on ceased." Ricordano Malespini in Muratori, Rev. 1t. Script t. viii. p. 939.; and G. Villani, in the same words, Hist. lib. v. c. 16.

The French translator abovementioned speaks of her having poisoned her husband. The death of Henry VI. is recorded in the Chronicon Sicilia, by an anonymous writer, (Muratori, t. x.) but not a word of his having been poisoned by Constance; and Ricordano Malespini even mentions her decease as happening before that of her husband, Henry V. for so this author, with some others, terms him.

* The second.] Henry VI. son of Frederick I. was the second emperor of the house of Suabia; and his son Frederick II. "the third and last."

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.

While they still continue in the moon, Beatrice removes certain doubts, which Dante had conceived respecting the place assigned to the blessed, and respecting the will absolute or conditional. He inquires whether it is possible to make satisfaction for a vow broken.

BETWEEN two kinds of food, both equally Remote and tempting, first a man might die Of hunger, ere he one could freely choose. E'en so would stand a lamb between the maw Of two fierce wolves, in dread of both alike: E'en so between two deer a dog would stand. Wherefore, if I was silent, fault nor praise I to myself impute; by equal doubts Held in suspense, since of necessity It hoppen'd. Silent was I, yet desire Was painted in my looks: and thus I spake My wish more earnestly than language could.

As Daniel,* when the haughty king he freed

10

^{*} Daniel.] See Daniel, ii. Beatrice did for Dante what Daniel did for Nebuchadnezzar, when he freed the king from the uncertainty respecting his dream, which had enraged him against the Chaldeans. Lombardi conjectures that "Fe si Beatrice" should be read, instead of "Fessi Beatrice;" and his conjecture has since been confirmed by the Monte Cassino MS.

From ire, that spurr'd him on to deeds unjust And violent: so did Beatrice then.

"Well I discern," she thus her words address'd,
"How thou art drawn by each of these desires,*
So that thy anxious thought is in itself
Bound up and stifled, nor breathes freely forth.
Thou arguest: if the good intent remain;
What reason that another's violence
Should stint the measure of my fair desert?

"Cause too thou findst for doubt, in that it seems, That spirits to the stars, as Plato† deem'd, Return. These are the questions which thy will Urge equally; and therefore I, the first, Of that will treat which hath the more of gall. § Of seraphim he who is most ensky'd, Moses and Samuel, and either John, Choose which thou wilt, nor even Mary's self, Have not in any other heav'n their seats,

^{*} By each of these desires.] His desire to have each of the doubts, which Beatrice mentions, resolved.

⁺ Plato.] $\equiv v\sigma \ln \sigma ac$ $\delta \epsilon$, κ , τ , λ . Plato, Timæus, v. ix. p 326. Edit. Bip "The Creator, when he had framed the universe, distributed to the stars an equal number of souls, appointing to each soul its several star."

^{\$} Of that.] Plato's opinion.

[§] Which hath the more of gall.] Which is the more dangerous.

¶ Of Seraphim.]" He amongst the Seraphim who is most nearly united with God, Moses. Samuel, and both the Johns, the Baptist and the Evangelist dwell not in any other heaven than do those spirits whom thou hast just beheld; nor does even the blessed Virgin herself dwell in any other: nor is their existence either longer or shorter than that of these spirits." She first resolves his doubt whether souls do not return to their own stars, as he had read in the Timaeus of Plato. Angels, then, and beatified spirits, she declares, dwell all and eternally together, only partaking more or less of the divine glory, in the empyrean; although, in condescension to human understanding, they appear to have different spheres allotted to them.

Than have those spirits which so late thou saw'st: Nor more or fewer years exist; but all . Make the first circle* beauteous, diversly Partaking of sweet life, as more or less Afflation of eternal bliss pervades them. Here were they shown thee, not that fate assigns This for their sphere, but for a sign to thee Of that celestial furthest from the height. Thus needs, that ye may apprehend, we speak: 40 Since from things sensible alone ye learn That, which, digested rightly, after turns To intellectual. For no other cause The scripture, condescending graciously To your perception, hands and feet to God Attributes, nor so means; and holy church Doth represent with human countenance Gabriel, and Michael, and him who made Tohias whole.† Unlike what here thou seest. The judgment of Timæus,† who affirms 50 Each soul restor'd to its particular star; Believing it to have been taken thence. When nature gave it to inform her mold: Yet to appearance his intention is Not what his words declare: and so to shun Derision, haply thus he hath disguis'd

Tobias whole.

Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd To travel with Tobias, and secur'd His marriage with the sev'n times wedded maid.

‡ Timœus. In the Convito, p. 92. our author again refers to the Timæus of Plato, on the subject of the mundane system; but it is in order to give the preference to the opinion respecting it held by Aristotle.

^{*} The first circle. The empyrean.

t - Him who made

His true opinion.* If his meaning be,
That to the influencing of these orbs revert
The honour and the blame in human acts,
Perchance he doth not wholly miss the truth.
This principle, not understood aright,
Erewhile perverted well nigh all the world;
So that it fell.to fabled names of Jove,
And Mercury, and Mars. That other doubt,
Which moves thee, is less harmful; for it brings
No peril of removing thee from me.

"That, to the eye of man,† our justice seems
Unjust, is argument for faith, and not
For heretic declension. But, to the end
This truth‡ may stand more clearly in your view,

I will content thee even to thy wish.

"If violence be, when that which suffers, nought Consents to that which forceth, not for this These spirits stood exculpate. For the will, That wills not, still survives unquench'd, and doth, As nature doth in fire, though violence

* His true opinion.] In like manner, our learned Stillingfleet has professed himself "somewhat inclinable to think that Plato knew more of the lapse of mankin! than he would openly discover, and for that end disguised it after his usual manner in that hypothesis of pre-existence." Origines Sacræ, b. iii. e. iii. § 15.

† That, to the eye of man.] "That the ways of divine justice are often inscrutable to man, ought rather to be a motive to faith than an inducement to heresy." Such appears to me the most

satisfactory explanation of the passage.

‡ This truth.] That it is no impeachment of God's justice, if merit be lessened through compulsion of others, without any failure of good intention on the part of the meritorious. After all, Beatrice ends by admitting that there was a defect in the will, which hindered Constance and the others from seizing the first opportunity, that offered itself to them, of returning to the monastic life.

Wrest it a thousand times; for, if it yield Or more or less, so far it follows force. And thus did these, when they had power to seek The hallow'd place again. In them, had will 80 Been perfect, such as once upon the bars Held Laurence* firm, or wrought in Scavolat To his own hand remorseless; to the path, Whence they were drawn, their steps had hasten'd back, When liberty return'd: but in too few, Resolve, so steadfast, dwells. And by these words If duly weigh'd, that argument is void, Which oft might have perplex'd thee still. Another question thwarts thee, which, to solve, Might try thy patience without better aid. 90 I have, no doubt, instill'd into thy mind, That blessed spirit may not lie; since near The source of primal truth it dwells for ave: And thou might'st after of Piccarda learn That Constance held affection to the veil: So that she seems to contradict me here. Not seldom, brother, it hath chanc'd for men To do what they had gladly left undone; Yet, to shun peril, they have done amiss: E'en as Alcmæon, t at his father's | suit 100 Sicw his own mother; I so made pitiless, Not to lose pity. On this point bethink thee, That force and will are blended in such wise As not to make the offence excusable. Absolute will agrees not to the wrong;

[·] Laurence.] Who suffered martyrdom in the third century.

[†] Scievola.[See Liv. Hist. D. 1. lib. ii. 12. † Alcmieon.] Ovid, Met. lib. ix. f. 10.

[|] His father's.] Amphiaraus.

I His own mother.] Eriphyle.

Bnt inasmuch as there is fear of wo From non-compliance, it agrees. Of will,* Thus absolute, Piccarda spake, and I Of the' other; so that both have truly said."

Such was the flow of that pure rill, that well'd

From forth the fountain of all truth; and such
The rest, that to my wand'ring thoughts I found.

"O thon, of primal love the prime delight, Goddess!" I straight reply'd, "whose lively words Still shed new heat and vigour through my sonl; Affection fails me to requite thy grace With equal sum of gratitude: be his To recompense, who sees and can reward thee. Well I discern, that by that truthi alone Enlighten'd, heyond which no truth may roam. 120 Our mind can satisfy her thirst to know; Therein she resteth, e'en as in his lair The wild beast, soon as she hath reach'd that bound. And she hath power to reach it; else desire Were given to no end, And thence doth donht Spring, like a shoot, around the stock of truth; And it is nature which, from height to height, On to the sammit prompts as. This invites. This doth assure me, Lady! rev'rently To ask thee of another trnth, that yet 130 Is dark to me. I fain would know, if man By other works well-done may so supply

The failure of his vows, that in your scale

^{*} Of will.] "What Piccarda asserts of Constance, that she retained her affection to the monastic life, is said absolutely and without relation to circumstances; and that, which I affirm, is spoken of the will conditionally and respectively: so that our apparent difference is without any disagreement."

⁺ That tridh.] The light of divine truth.

They lack not weight." I spake; and on me straight Beatrice look'd, with eyes that shot forth sparks Of love celestial, in such copious stream, That, virtue sinking in me overpower'd, I turn'd; and downward hent, confus'd, my sight.

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CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.

The question proposed in the last Canto is answered. Dante ascends with Beatrice to the planet Mercury, which is the second heaven; and here he finds a multitude of spirits, one of whom offers to satisty him of any thing he may desire to know from them.

"IF beyond earthly wont,* the flame of love Illume me, so that I o'ercome thy power Of vision, marvel not: but learn the cause In that perfection of the sight, which, soon As apprehending, hasteneth on to reach The good it apprehends. I well discern, How in thine intellect already shines The light eternal, which to view alone Ne'er fatts to kindle love; and if aught else Your love seduces, 'tis but that it shows Some ill-mark'd vestige of that primal beam.

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"This would'st thou know: if failure of the vow By other service may be so supplied, As from self-question to assure the soul."

* If beyond earthly wont.] Dante having been unable to sustain the splendor of Beatrice, as we have seen at the end of the last Canto, she tells him to attribute her increase of brightness to the place in which they were.

Thus she her words, not heedless of my wish, Began; and thus, as one who hreaks not off Discourse, continued in her saintly strain. "Supreme of gifts, which God, creating, gave Of his free bounty, sign most evident Of goodoess, and in his account most priz'd, Was liberty of will; the boon, wherewith All intellectual creatures, and them sole, Hence now thou mayst iofer He hatb endow'd. Of what high worth the vow, which so is fram'd, That when man offers, God well-pleas'd accepts; For in the compact between God and him, This treasure, such as I describe it to thee. He makes the victim; and of Lis own act. What compensation therefore may he find? If that, whereof thou hast oblation made. 30 By using well thou think'st to consecrate, Thou would'st of theft* do charitable deed. Thus I resolve thee of the greater point.

"But forasmuch as holy church, herein
Dispensing, seems to contradict the truth
I have discover'd to thee, yet beloves
Thou rest a little longer at the board,
Ere the crude aliment which thou hast ta'en,
Digested fitly, to nutrition turn.
Open thy mind to what I now unfold;
And give it inward keeping. Knowledge comes
Of learning well retain'd, unfruitful clsc.

"This sacrifice, in essence, of two things;

^{*} Thou would'st of theft.] "Licet fur de furto. &c." De Monarchia, lib. ii. p. 123. "Although a thief should out of that which he has stolen give help to a poor man, yet is that not to be called almsgiving."

[†] Two things. The one, the substance of the vow, as of a single life for instance, or of keeping fast; the other, the compact, or form of it.

Consisteth: one is that, whereof 't is made; The covenant, the other. For the last, It ne'er is cancel'd, if not kept: and hence I spake, erewhile, so strictly of its force. For this it was enjoin'd the Israelites.* Though leave were giv'n them, as thou know'st, to change The offering, still to offer. Th' other part, 50 The matter and the substance of the vow, May well be such, as that, without offence, It may for other substance he exchang'd. But, at his own discretion, none may shift The hurden on his shoulders: unreleas'd By either key, the yellow and the white. Nor deem of any change, as less than vain, If the last hondt he not within the new Included, as the quatre in the six. No satisfaction therefore can be paid 60 For what so precious in the balance weighs, That all in counterpoise must kick the beam. Take then no vow at random: ta'en, with faith Preserve it; vet not hent, as Jephthah once, Blindly to execute a rash resolve, Whom hetter it had suited to exclaim, 'I have done ill,' than to redeem his pledge By doing worse: or, not unlike to him In folly, that great leader of the Greeks; Whence, on the altar, Iphigenia mourn'd 70-Her virgin beauty, and hath since made mourn Both wise and simple, even all, who hear Of so fell sacrifice. Be ye more staid, O Christians! not, like feather, hy each wind

^{*} It was enjoin'd the Israelites.] See Lev. c. xii. and xxvii.

[†] Either key.] Purgatory, Canto ix. 108.

[†] If the last bond.] If the thing substituted be not far more precious than that which is released.

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Removeable; nor think to cleanse yourselves In every water. Either testament, The old and new, is yours: and for your guide, The shepherd of the church. Let this suffice To save you. When by cvil lust entic'd, Remember ye be men, not senseless beasts; Nor let the Jew, who dwelleth in your streets, Hold you in mock'ry. Be not, as the lamb, That, fickle wanton, leaves its mother's milk, To dally with itself in idle play.'

Such were the words that Beatrice spake: These ended, to that region,* where the world Is liveliest, full of fond desire she turn'd.

Though mainly prompt new question to propose, Her silence and chang'd look did keep me dumb. And as the arrow, cre the cord is still, Leapeth unto its mark; so on we sped Into the second realm. There I heheld The dame, so joyous, enter, that the orb Grew hrighter at her smiles; and, if the star Were mov'd to gladness, what then was my cheer, Whom nature hath made apt for every change!

As in a quiet and clear lake the fish,
If aught approach them from without, do draw
Towards it, deeming it their food; so drew
Full more than thousand splendours towards us;
And in each one was heard: "Lo! one arriv'd
To multiply our loves!" and as each came,
The shadow, streaming forth effulgence new,
Witness'd augmented joy. Here, reader! think,
If thou didst miss the sequel of my tale,

^{*} That region.] As some explain it, the east: according to others, the equinoctial line. Lombardi thinks, not without reason, that it is meant she looked upwards.

To know the rest how sorely thou wouldst crave;
And thou shalt see what vehement desire
Possess'd me, soon as these had met my view,
To know their state. "O born in happy hour!
Thou, to whom grace vouchsafes, or ere thy close
Of fleshly warfare, to behold the thrones
Of that eternal triumph; know, to us
The light communicated, which through heaven
Expatiates without bound. Therefore, if aught
Thou of our beams wouldst borrow for thine aid,
Spare not; and, of our radiance, take thy fill."

Thus of those niteous spirits one besnake me: And Beatrice next: "Say on; and trust As unto gods,"-" How in the light supreme Thou harbour'st, and from thence the virtue bring'st. That, sparkling in thine eyes, denotes thy joy. 120 I mark: but, who thou art, am still to seek; Or wherefore, worthy spirit! for thy lot This sphere* assign'd, that oft from mortal ken Is veil'd by other's beams," I said; and turn'd Toward the lustre, that with greeting kind Erewhile had hail'd me. Forthwith, brighter far Than erst, it wax'd: and, as himself the sun Hides through excess of light, when his warm gazet Hath on the mantle of thick vapours prey'd; Within its proper ray the saintly shape 130 Was, through increase of gladness, thus conceal'd; And, shrouded so in splendour, answer'd me, E'en as the tenor of my song declares.

^{*} This sphere.] The planet Mercury, which, being nearest to the sun, is oftenest hidden by that luminary.

⁺ When his warm gaze.] When the sun has dried up the va-



CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.

The spirit, who had offered to satisfy the inquiries of Dante, declares himself to be the Emperor Justinian; and after speaking of his own actions, recounts the victories, before him, obtained under the Roman Eagle. He then informs our Poet that the soul of Romeo the pilgrim is in the same star.

"AFTER that Constanting the eagle turn'd*
Against the motions of the heav'n, that roll'd
Consenting with its course, when he of yore,
Lavinia's spouse, was leader of the flight;
A hundred years twice told and more,† his seat
At Europe's extreme point,‡ the bird of Jove

* After that Constantine the eagle turn'd.] Constantine, in transferring the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, carried the eagle, the Imperial ensign, from the west to the east. Æneas, on the contrary, had, with better augury, moved along with the Sun's course, when he passed from Troy to Italy.

† A hundred years twice told and more.] The Emperor Constantine entered Byzantium in 324; and Justinian began his

reign in 527.

‡ At Europe's extreme point.] Constantinople being situated at the Extreme of Europe, and on the borders of Asia, near those mountains in the neighbourhood of Troy, from whence the first founders of Rome had emigrated. Held, near the mountains, whence he issued first: There under shadow of his sacred plumes Swaying the world, till through successive hands To mine he came devolv'd. Cæsar I was; 10 And am Justinian: destin'd by the will Of that prime love, whose influence I feel, From vain excess to clear th' incumber'd laws.* Or ere that work engag'd me, I did hold In Christ one nature only;† with such faith Contented. But the blessed Aganete.t Who was chief shepherd, he with warning voice To the true faith recall'd me. I believ'd His words: and what he taught, now plainly see. As thou in every contradiction seest 20 The true and false oppos'd. Soon as my feet Were to the church reclaim'd, to my great task, By inspiration of God's grace impell'd. I gave me wholly; and consign'd mine arms To Belisarius, with whom heav'n's right hand Was link'd in such conjointment, 't was a sign That I should rest. To thy first question thus I shape mine answer, which were ended here, But that its tendency doth prompt perforce To some addition; that thou well mayst mark. 30 What reason on each side they have to plead, By whom that holiest banner is withstood.

* To clear the' incumber'd laws.] The code of laws was abridged and reformed by Justinian.

† Christ one nature only.] Justinian is said to have been a follower of the heretical opinions held by Eutyches, "who taught that in hrist there was but one nature, viz. that of the incarnate word," Maclaine's Mosheim, tom. ii. cent. v. p. ii. cap. v. § 13.

[‡] Agapete.] * Agapetus, Bishop of Rome, whose Scheda Regia, addressed to the Emperor Justinian, procured him a place among the wisest and most judicious writers of this century. *Ibid.* cent. vi. p. ii. cap. ii. § 8.

Both who pretend its nower* and who oppose, t "Beginning from that hour, when Pallas diedt To give it rule, behold the valorous deeds Have made it worthy reverence. Not unknown To thee, how for three hundred years and more It dwelt in Alba, up to those fell lists Where, for its sake, were met the rival three:8 Nor aught unknown to thee, which it achiev'd 40 Down || from the Sabines' wrong to Lucrece' wo: With its sev'n kings, conqu'ring the nations round: Nor all it wrought, by Roman worthies borne 'Gainst Brennus and th' Epirot prince, I and hosts Of single chiefs, or states in league combin'd Of social warfare: hence, Torquatus stern, And Quintius** nam'd of his neglected locks, The Decii, and the Fabii hence acquir'd Their fame, which I with duteous zeal embalm. By it the pride of Arab hordest was quell'd, 50 When they, led on hy Hannibal, o'erpass'd The Alpine rocks, whence glide thy currents, Po!

^{*} Who pretend its power.] The Ghibellines.

[†] And who oppose.] The Guelphs. ‡ Pollas died.] See Virgil, Æn. lib. x.

[&]amp; The rival three.] The Horatii and Curiatii

^{||} Down.] " From the rape of the Sabine women to the violation of Lucretia.

The' Epirot prince | King Pyrrhus. ** Quintius.] Quintus Cincinnatus.

tt Arab hordes. The Arabians seem to be put for the barbarians in general. Lombardi's comment is, that as the Arabs are an Asiatic people, and it is not recorded that Hannibal had any other troops except his own countrymen the Carthagenians. who were Africans, we must understand that Dante denominates that people, Arabs, on account of their origin. " Ab Ifrico Arabiæ felicis rege, qui omnium primus banc terram (Africam) incoluisse fertur," &c. Leo Africanus. Africa Descriptio, lib. i. cap. i.

Beneath its guidance, in their prime of days Scipio and Pompey triumph'd; and that hill,* Under whose summitt thon didst see the light, Rued its stern hearing. After, near the hour, t When heav'n was minded that o'er all the world His own deep calm should brood, to Cæsar's hand Did Rome consign it; and what then it wrought! From Var unto the Rhine, saw Isere's flood, 60 Saw Loire and Seine, and every vale, that fills The torrent Rhone. What after that it wrought, When from Ravenna it came forth, and leap'd The Rubicon, was of so hold a flight, That tongue nor pen may follow it. Tow'rds Spain It wheel'd its bands, then tow'rd Dyrrachium smote, And on Pharsalia, with so fierce a plunge, E'en the warm Nile was conscious to the pang; Its native shores Antandros, and the streams Of Simois revisited, and there 70 Where Hector lies; then ill for Ptolemy His pennons shook again; lightening thence fell On Juha; and the next, upon your west, At sound of the Pompeian trump, return'd. "What following, and in its next hearer's gripe, !!

It wrought, is now by Cassius and Brutus Bark'd of I in hell; and by Perugia's sons,

^{*} That hill.] The city of Fesulæ, which was sacked by the Romans after the deteat of Catiline.

⁺ Under whose summit.] " At the foot of which is situated Florence, thy birth-place."

[‡] Near the hour.] Near the time of our Saviour's birth.

[|] What then it varought.] In the following fifteen lines the Poet has comprised the exploits of Julius Casar, for which, and for the allusions in the greater part of this speech of Justinian's, I must refer my reader to the history of Rome.

[|] In its next bearer's gripe.] With Augustus Cæsar.

A Bark'd of .] TOLUUB' UNANTEL

And Modena's, was mourn'd. Hence weepeth still
Sad Cleopatra, who, pursued hy it,
Took from the adder black and sudden death.
With him it ran e'en to the Red Sea coast;
With him compos'd the world to such a peace,
That of his temple Janus barr'd the door.

"But all the mighty standard yet had wrought, And was appointed to perform thereafter, Throughout the mortal kingdom which it sway'd, Falls in appearance dwindled and obscur'd, If one with steady eye and perfect thought On the third Cæsar* look; for to his hands, The living Justice, in whose hreath I move, Committed glory, e'en into his hands, To execute the vengeance of its wrath.

"Hear now, and wonder at, what next I tell.
After with Titus it was sent to wreak
Vengeance for vengeance† of the ancient sin.
And, when the Lomhard tooth, with fang impure,
Did gore the bosom of the holy church,
Under its wings, victorious, Charlemagnc‡
Sped to her rescue. Judge then for thyself
Of those, whom I erewhile accus'd to thee,

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* The third Cosars.] The eagle in the hand of Tiherius, the third of the Cosars, outdid all its achievements, both past and future, hy hecoming the instrument of that mighty and mysterious act of satisfaction made to the divine justice in the crucifixion of our Lord. This is Lombardi's explanation; and he deserves much credit for heing right, where all the other commentators, as far as I know, are wrong. See note to Purg. canto xxxii. 50.

† Vengeance for vengeance.] This will be afterwards explained by the Poet himself. See next Canto, v. 47, and note.

† Charlemagne.] Dante could not be ignorant that the reign of Justinian was long prior to that of Charlemagne; but the spirit of the former emperor is represented, both in this instance and in what follows, as conscious of the events that had taken place after his own time.

What they are, and how grievous their offending, Who are the cause of all your ills. The one Against the universal ensign rears
The yellow lilies;* and with partial aim,
That, to hunself, the other arrogates:
So that 't is hard to see which more offends.
Be yours, ye Ghibellines,† to veil your arts

* The yellow lilies. The French ensign.

† Te Ghibellines.] "Authors differ much as to the beginning of these factions, and the origin of the names by which they were distinguished. Some say that they began in Italy as early as the time of the Emperor Frederic I. in his well-known disputes, with Pope Alexander III. about the year 1100. Others make them more ancient, dating them from the reign of the Emperor Henry IV. who died in 1125. But the most common opinion is, that they grose in the contests between the Emperor Frederic II. and Pope Gregory IX. and that this Emperor wishing to ascertain who were his own adherents, and who those of the Pope, caused the former to be marked by the appellation of Ghibellines, and the latter by that of Guelphs. It is more probable however, that the factions were at this time either renewed, or disfused more widely, and that their origin was of an earlier date, since it is certain that G. Villani, h. v. c. 37, Ricordane Malaspina, c. civ. and Pietro Buoninsegni, b. L. of their histories of Florence, are agreed, that even from 1215, that is long before Frederic had succeeded to the Empire, and Gregory to the Postificate, by the death of Buondelmone Buondelmonti, one of the chief gentlemen in Florence, (See Par. cauto xvi. v. 139.) the factious of the Guelfi and Ghihellini were introduced into that city." A. G. Artegiani, Annotations on the Quadriregio, p. 180. "The same variety of opinion prevails with regard to the origin of the names. Some deduce them from two brothers, who were Germans, the one called Guelph, and the other Gibel, who being the partizans of two powerful families in Pistora, the Panciatichi and the Cancellieri, then at enmity with each other, were the first occasion of these titles having been given to the discordant factions. Others, with more probability, derive them from Guelph or Guelphone, Duke of Bayaria, and Gibello, a castle where his antagonist, the Emperor Conrad the Third, was born; in conscquence of a bat le between Guelph and Henry the son of Conrad, which was fought (according to Mini, in his Defence of Florence, p. 48) A. D. 1738. Others assign to them an origin yet more ancient; asserting, that at the election of Frederic I. to the

Beneath another standard: ill is this Follow'd of him, who severs it and justice: And let not with his Guelphs the new-crown'd Charles* Assail it; but those talons hold in dread, Which from a lion of more lofty port Have rent the casing. Many a time ere now The sons have for the sire's transgression wail'd: Nor let him trust the fond belief, that heav'n Will truck its armour for his lillied shield.

"This little star is furnish'd with good spirits. Whose mortal lives were busied to that end. That honour and renown might wait on them: And, when desirest thus err in their intention, True love must needs ascend with slacker beam. 120 But it is part of our delight, to measure Our wages with the merit; and admirc The close proportion. Hence doth heav'nly justice Temper so evenly affection in us, It ne'er can warp to any wrongfulness. Of diverse voices is sweet music made: So in our life the different degrees Render sweet harmony among these wheels. "Within the pearl, that now encloseth us,

Empire, the Electors concurred in choosing him, in order to extinguish the inveterate discords between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, that prince being descended by the paternal line from the Ghibellines, and by the maternal from the Guelphs.

* Charles.] The commentators explain this to mean Charles II. king of Naples and Sicily. Is it not more likely to allude to Charles of Vallois, son of Philip III. of France, who was sent for about this time, into Italy by Pope Boniface, with the promise of being made emperor? See G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. 42.

+ When desires.] When honour and fame are the chief motives to action, that love, which has heaven for its object, must

necessarily become less fervent.

Shines Romeo's light,* whose goodly deed and fair 130 Met ill acceptance. But the Provengals.

That were his foes, have little cause for mirth.

Ill shapes that man his course, who makes his wrong Of other's worth. Four daughter were there born To Raymond Berenger; and every one Became a queen; and this for him did Romeo, Though of mean state and from a foreign land.

Yet envious tongues incited him to ask

* Romeo's light. The story of Romeo is involved in some uncertainty. The name of Romeo signified, as we have seen in the note Purg. canto xxxiii. v. 78, one who went on a pilgrimage to Rome. The French writers assert the continuance of his ministerial office even after the decease of his sovoreign, Ravmond Berenger, Count of Provence; and they rest this assertion chiefly on the fact of a certain Romieu de Villeneuve, who was the contemporary of that prince, having left large possessions behind him, as appears hy his will preserved in the archives of the bishoprick of Vence. That they are right as to the name at least, would appear from the following marginal note on the Monte Cassino MS Romeo de Villanova districtus civitatis Ventiaede Provincia olim administratoris Raymundi Belingeri Comitis de Provincia-ivit peregrinando contemplatione ad Deum. Yet it is improbable, on the other hand, that the Italians, who lived so near the time, should be misinformed in an occurrence of such notoriety. According to them, after he had long heen a faithful steward to Raymond, when an account was required from him of the revenues which he had carefully husbanded, and his master as lavishly disbursed, "he demanded the little mule, the staff and the scrip, with which he had first entered into the count's service, a stranger pilgrin from the shrine of St. James, in Galicia, and parted as he came; nor was it ever known whence he was, or whither he went." G. Villani, lib. vi. c. 92.

† Four aughters:] Of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger, Margaret, the eldest, was married to Louis IX. of France; Eleanor, the next, to Henry III. of England; rancha, the third, to Richard, Henry's brother, and King of the Romans; and the youngest, Beatrice, to Charles I. king of Naples and Sicily, and brother to Louis.

† Raymon'd Berenger.] This prince, the last of the house of Barcelona, who was Count of Provence, died in 1245. He is in the list of Provencal poets. See Millot. Hist. Litt. des Troubadours, tom. ii, p. 112.

A reckoning of that just one, who return'd
Twelve fold to him for ten. Aged and poor
He parted thence: and if the world did know
The heart he had, begging his life by morsels,
'T would deem the praise, it yields him, scantly dealt.''



CANTO VII.

ARGUMENT.

In consequence of what had been said by Justinian, who together with the other spirits have now disappeared, some doubts arise in the mind of Dante respecting the human redemption. These difficulties are fully explained by Beatrice.

"Hosanna Sancta Deus Sahaoth
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malahoth!"*
Thus chanting saw I turn that substance bright,†
With fourfold lustre to its orb again,
Revolving; and the rest, unto their dance,
With it, mov'd also; and, like swiftest sparks,
In sudden distance from my sight were veil'd.

Me douht possess'd: and "Speak," it whisper'd me,
"Speak, speak unto thy lady; that she quench 11
Thy thirst with drops of sweetness." Yet blank awe,
Which lords it o'er me, even at the sound
Of Beatrice's name, did how me down
As one in slumher held. Not long that mood
Beatrice suffer'd: she, with such a smile,

^{*} Malahoth] A Hebrew word, signifying "kingdoms."

*That substance bright.] Justinian.

As might have made one blest amid the flames,
Beaming upon me, thus her words began:
"Thou in thy thought art pond'ring (as I deem,
And what I deem is truth) how just revenge
Could be with justice punish'd; from which doubt
I soon will free thee, so thou mark my words;
For they of weighty matter shall possess thee.

"Enduring not the bridle on his will, That man, who was unborn,* himself condemn'd; And, in himself, all, who since him have liv'd. His offspring: whence, below, the human kind Lay sick in grievous error many an age; Until it pleas'd the Word of God to come Amongst them down, to his own person joining The nature from its Maker far estrang'd. 30 By the mere act of his eternal love. Contemplate here the wonder I unfold. The nature with its maker thus conjoin'd. Created first was blameless, pure and good; But, through itself alone, was driven forth From Paradise, because it had eschew'd The way of truth and life, to evil tura'd. Ne'er then was penalty so just as that Inflicted by the cross, if thou regard The nature in assumption doom'd; ne'er wrong 40 So great, in reference to him, who took Such nature on him, and endur'd the doom. So different effectst flow'd from one act: For by one death God and the Jews were pleas'd; And heav'n was open'd, though the earth did quake.

^{*} That man, who was unborn.] Adam.

[†] Different effects.] The death of Christ was pleasing to God, inasmuch as it satisfied the divine justice; and to the Jews, because it gratified their malignity: and while heaven opened for joy at the ransom of man, the earth trembled through compassion for its Maker.

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Count it not hard henceforth, when thou dost hear That a just vengeance* was, hy righteous court, Justly reveng'd. But yet I see thy mind, By thought on thought arising, sore perplex'd; And, with how vehement desire, it asks Solution of the maze. What I have heard, Is plain, thou say'st: but wherefore God this way For our redemption chose, eludes my search.

" Brother! no eye of man not perfected, Nor fully ripen'd in the flame of love, May fathom this decree. It is a mark, In sooth, much aim'd at, and but little kenn'd; And I will therefore show thee why such way Was worthiest. The celestial love, that spurns All envying in its hounty, in itself 60 With such effulgence blazeth, as sends forth All heanteous things eternal. What distilst Immediate thence, no end of being knows; Bearing its seal immutably impress'd. Whatever thence immediate falls, is free, Free wholly, uncontrollable by power Of each thing new; by such conformity More grateful to its author, whose bright heams, Though all partake their shining, vet in those Are liveliest, which resemble him the most. 70

* A just vengeance.] The punishment of Christ by the Jews, although just as far as regarded the human nature assumed by him, and so a righteous vengeance of sin, yet being unjust as it regarded the divine nature, was itself justly revenged on the Jews by the destruction of Jerusalem.

These tokens of pre-eminencet on man

+ What distils.] "That, which proceeds immediately from God, and without the intervention of secondary causes, is immortal."

† These tokens of pre-eminence.] The hefore-mentioned gifts of immediate creation by God, independence on secondary causes, and consequent similitude and agreeableness to the divine Being, all at first conferred on man.

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Largely bestow'd, if any of them fail, He needs must forfeit his nobility. No longer stainless. Sin alone is that, Which doth disfranchise him, and make unlike To the chief good; for that its light in him Is darken'd. And to diguity thus lost Is no return; unless, where guilt makes void, He for ill pleasure pay with equal pain. Your nature, which entirely in its seed Transgress'd, from these distinctions fell, no less Than from its state in Paradise; nor means Found of recovery (search all methods out As strictly as thou may) save one of these, The only fords were left through which to wade: Either, that God had of his courtesy Releas'd him merely; or else, man himself For his own folly by himself aton'd.

"Fix now thine eye, intently as thou canst, On th' everlasting counsel; and explore, Instructed by my words, the dread abyss.

"Man in himself had ever lack'd the means
Of satisfaction, for he could not stoop
Oheying, in humility so low,
As high, he, disobeying, thought to soar:
And, for this reason, he had vainly tried,
Out of his own sufficiency, to pay
The rigid satisfaction. Then behov'd
That God should hy his own ways lead him back
Unto the life, from whence he fell, restor'd;
By both his ways, I mean, or one alone.*
But since the decd is ever priz'd the more,
The more the doer's good intent appears;

^{*} By both his ways, I mean, or one alone.] Either by mercy and justice united, or by mercy alone.

120

Goodness celestial, whose broad signature
Is on the universe, of all its ways
To raise ye up, was fain to leave out none.
Nor aught so vast or so magnificent,
Either for him who gave or who receiv'd,
Between the last night and the primal day,
Was or can be. For God more bounty show'd,
Giving himself to make man capable
Of his return to life, than had the terms
Been mere and unconditional release.
And for his justice, every method else
Were all too scant, had not the Son of God
Humbled himself to put on mortal flesh.

"Now, to content thee fully, I revert;
And further in some part* unfold my speech,
That thou mayst see it clearly as myself.

"I see, thou sayst, the air, the fire I see, The earth and water, and all things of them Compounded, to corruption turn, and soon Dissolve. Yet these were also things create. Because, if what were told me, had been true, They from corruption had been therefore free.

"The angels, O my brother, and this clime Wherein thou art, impassible and pure, I call created, even as they are In their whole being. But the elements,

* In some part.] She reverts to that part of her discourse where she had said that what proceeds immediately from God "no end of being knows." She then proceeds to tell him that the elements, which, though he knew them to be created, he yet saw dissolved, received their form not immediately from God, but from a virtue or power created by God; that the soul of brutes and plants is in like manner drawn forth by the stars with a combination of those elements meetly tempered, "di complession potenziata;" but that the engels and the heavens may be said to be created in that very manner in which they exist, without any intervention of agency.

Which thou hast nam'd, and what of them is made,
Are by created virtue inform'd: create,
Their substance; and create, th' informing virtue
In these bright stars, that round them circling move.
The soul of every brute and of each plant,
The ray and motion of the sacred lights,
Draw from complexion with meet power endued.
But this our life th' eternal good inspires
Immediate, and enamours of itself;
So that our wishes rest for ever here.

"And hence thou mayst by inference conclude 140 Our resurrection certain,* if thy mind Consider how the human flesh was fram'd, When both our parents at the first were made."

* Our resurrection certain.] It is, perhaps, here intended that the whole of God's dispensation should be taken into the account. The conclusion may be that as before sin man was immortal, and even in flesh proceeded immediately from God, so being restored to the favour of heaven by the expiation made for sin, he necessarily recovers his claim to immortality even in the body.

There is much in this poem to justify the encomium which the learned Salvini has passed on it, when, in an epistle to Redi, imitating what Horace had said of Homer, that the duties of life might be better learnt from the Grecian bard, than from the teachers of the porch or the academy, he says—

And dost thou ask, what themes my mind engage? The lonely hours I give to Dante's page; And meet more sacred learning in his lines, Than I had gain'd from all the school divines.

CANTO VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The Poet ascends with Beatrice to the third heaven, which is the planet Venus; and here finds the soul of Charles Martel, king of Hungary, who had been Dante's friend on earth, and who now, after speaking of the realms to which he was heir, unfolds the cause why children differ in disposition from their parents.

THE world* was, in its day of peril dark,
Wont to believe the dotage of fond love,
From the fair Cyprian deity, who rolls
In her third epicycle,† shed on men
By stream of potent radiance: therefore they
Of elder time, in their old error blind,

* The world.] The Poet, on his arrival at the third heaven, tells us that the world, in its days of heathen darkness, helieved the influence of sensual love to proceed from this star, to which, under the name of Venus, they paid divine honours; as they worshipped the supposed mother and son of Venus, under the names of Dione and Cupid.

† Epicycle.] ——— the sphere

With centric and eccentric scribled o'er,

Cycle and Epicycle.

Milton, P. L. b. viii. 84.

"In sul dosso di questo cerchio," &c. Convilo di Dante, p. 48.
"Upon the back of this circle, in the heaven of Venus, whereof we are now treating, is a little sphere, which has in that heaven a revolution of its own; whose circle the astronomers term epicycle."

Not her alone with sacrifice ador'd

And invocation, but like honours paid

To Cupid and Dione, deem'd of them

Her mother, and her son, him whom they feign'd

To sit in Dido's bosom:* and from her,

Whom I have sung preluding, horrow'd they

The appellation of that star, which views

Now obvious,† and now averse, the sun.

I was not ware that I was wafted up
Into its orb; hut the new loveliness,
That grac'd my lady, gave me ample proof
That we had enter'd there. And as in flame
A sparkle is distinct, or voice in voice
Discern'd, when one its even tenor keeps,
The other comes and goes; so in that light
I other luminaries saw, that cours'd
In circling motion, rapid more or less,
As their teternal vision each impels.

Nover was blast from vapour charg'd with cold,
Whether invisible to eye or no, ||
Descended with such speed, it had not seem'd
To linger in dull tardiness, compar'd
To those celestial lights, that tow'rds us came,
Leaving the circuit of their joyous ring,
Conducted by the lofty seraphim.
And after them, who in the van appear'd,

——— Il raggio della stella Che'l sol vagheggia or drieto or davanti.

Il Quadrir, lib. i. cap. i.

‡ As their.] As each, according to their several deser's, partakes more or less of the beatific vision.

| Whether invisible to eye or no.] He calls the blast invisible, if unattended by gross vapour; otherwise, visible.

^{*} To sit in Dido's bosom.] Virgil, Æn. lib. i. 718.

[†] Now obvious.] Being at one part of the year, a morning, and at another an evening star. So Frezzi:—

Such an Hosanna sounded, as hath left
Desire, ne'er since extinct in me, to hear
Renew'd the strain. Then, parting from the rest,
One near us drew, and sole began: "We all
Are ready at thy pleasure, well dispos'd
To do thee gentle service. We are they,
To whom thou in the world erewhile didst sing;
'O ye! whose intellectual ministry*

Moves the third heaven:' and in one orb we roll,
One motion, one impulse, with those who rule
Princedoms in heaven;† yet are of love so full,
That to please thee 't will be as sweet to rest.''

After mine eyes had with meek reverence
Sought the celestial guide, and were by her
Assur'd, they turn'd again unto the light,
Who had so largely promis'd; and with voice
That bare the lively pressure of my zeal,
"Tell who ye are," I eried. Forthwith it grew 50
In size and splendour, through augmented joy:
And thus it answer'd: "A short date, below,
The world possess'd me. Had the time been more,‡
Much evil, that will come, had never chane'd.

* 'O ye! whose intellectual ministry.]

Voi ch' intendendo il terzo ciel movete.

The first line in our Poet's first Canzone. See his Convito, p. 40. † Princedoms in heav'n.] See Canto xxviii. 112. where the princedoms are, as here, made co-ordinate with this third sphere. In his Convito, p. 54. he has ranked them differently, making the thrones the moving intelligences of Venus.

† Had the time been more.] The spirit now speaking is Charles Martel, crowned king of Hungary, and son of Charles II. King of Naples and Sicily, to which dominions, dying in his father's lifetime, he did not succeed. The evil, that would have been prevented by the longer life of Charles Martel, was that resistance which his brother Robert, king of Sicily, who succeeded him, made to the Emperor Henry VII. See G. Villani, lib. ix. cap. xxxviii.

My gladness hides thee from me, which doth shine Around, and shroud me, as an animal In its own silk enswath'd. Thou lov'dst me well.* And hadst good cause; for had my sojourning Been longer on the earth, the love I bare thee Had put forth more than blossoms. The left bank, t That Rhone, when he hath mix'd with Sorga, layes, 61 In me its lord expected, and that horn Of fair Ausonia t with its boroughs old. Bari, and Croton, and Gaeta pil'd, From where the Trento disembogues his waves, With Verde mingled, to the salt sea-flood, Aiready on my temples beam'd the crown, Which gave me sov'reignty over the land! By Danube wash'd, when as he strays beyond The limits of his German shores. The realm, 70 Where, on the gulf by stormy Eurus lash'd, Betwixt Pelorus and Pachynian heights, The beautiful Trinacria lies in gloom,

^{*} Thou lov'dst me well.] Charles Martel might have heen known to our Poet at Florence, whither he came to meet his father in 1295, the year of his death. The retinue and the habiliments of the young monarch are minutely described by G. Villani, who adds, that "he remained more than twenty days in Florence, waiting for his father King Charles and his brothers; during which time great honour was done him by the Florentines, and he showed no less love towards them, and he was much in favour with all." Lib. viii cap. xiii. His brother Robert, king of Naples, was the friend of Petrarch.

[†] The left bank.] Provence.

t - That horn

Of jair Ausonia.] The kingdom of Naples.

[[] The land.] Hungary.

The beautiful Trinacria.] Sicily; so called from its three promontories, of which Pachynus and Pelorus, here mentioned, are

(Not through Typhœus,* but the vap'ry cloud Bituminous upsteam'd,) that too did look To have its sceptre wielded by a race Of monarchs, sprung through me from Charles

Of monarchs, sprung through mc from Charles and Rodolph;†

Had not ill-lording, which doth spirit up
The people ever, in Palermo rais'd
The shout of 'death,' re-echo'd loud and long.
Had but my brother's foresight|| kenn'd as much,
He had been warier, that the greedy want
Of Catalonia might not work his bale.
And truly need there is, that he forecast,
Or other for him, lest more freight be laid
On his already over-laden bark.
Nature in him, from bouuty fall'n to thrift,
Would ask the guard of braver arms, than such
As only care to have their coffers fill'd."

"My liege! it doth enhance the joy thy words
Infuse into me, mighty as it is,
To think my gladness manifest to thee,
As to myself, who own it, when thou lookst
Into the source and limit of all good,

* Typhæus.] The giant, whom Jupiter is fabled to have overwhelmed under the mountain Ætna, from whence he vomited forth smoke and flame.

† Sprung through me from Charles and Rodolph.] "Sicily would be still ruled by a race of monarchs, descended through me from Charles I. and Rodolph I. the former my grandfather, king of Naples and Sicily; the latter, emperor of Germany, my father-in-law;" both celebrated in the Purgatory, canto vii.

‡ Had not ill-lording.] "If the ill conduct of our governors in Sicily had not excited the resentment and hatred of the people, and stimulated them to that dreadful massacre at the Sicilian vespers;" in consequence of which the kingdom fell into the hands of Peter III. of Arragon, in 1282.

| My brother's foresight.] He seems to tax his brother Robert with employing necessitous and greedy Catalonians to administer

the affairs of his kingdom.

There, where thou markest that which thou dost speak, Thence priz'd of me the more. Glad thou hast made me; Now make intelligent, clearing the doubt Thy speech hath rais'd in me: for much I muse, How bitter can spring up,* when sweet is sown.

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I thus inquiring: he forthwith replied: 100
"If I have power to show one truth, soon that
Shall face thee, which thy questioning dcclares
Behind thee now conceal'd. The Good,† that guides
And blessed makes this realm which thou dost mount,
Ordains its providence to be the virtue
In these great bodies: nor the natures only
The all-perfect mind provides for, but with them
That which preserves them too; for nought, that lies
Within the range of that unerring bow,
But is as level with the destin'd aim, 110
As ever mark to arrow's point opposed.
Were it not thus, these heavens thou dost visit.

* How bitter can spring up.] "How a covetous son can spring from a liheral father." Yet that father has himself been accused of avarice in the Purgatory, canto xx. 78; though his general character was that of a bounteous prince.

+ The Good. The Supreme Being uses these spheres as the intelligent instruments of his providence in the conduct of terrestrial natures; so that these natures cannot but he conducted aright. unless these heavenly hodies should themselves fail from not have ing heen made perfect at first, or the Creator of them should fail. To this Dante replies, that nature, he is satisfied, thus directed must do her part. Charles Martel then reminds him, that he had learnt from Aristotle, that buman society requires a variety of conditions, and consequently a variety of qualifications in its members. Accordingly, men, he concludes, are horn with different powers and capacities, caused by the influence of the heavenly hodies at the time of their nativity; on which influence, and not on their parents, those powers and capacities depend. Having thus resolved the question proposed, Charles Martel adds, hy way of corollary, that the want of observing their natural hent in the destination of men to their several offices in life, is the occasion of much of the disorder that prevails in the world:

Would their effect so work, it would not be Art, but destruction; and this may not chance, If the' intellectual powers, that move these stars, Fail not, and who, first faulty made them, fail. Wilt thou this truth more clearly evidenc'd?"

To whom I thus: "It is enough; no fear, I see, lest nature in her part should tire."

He straight rejoin'd: "Say, were it worse for man,
If he liv'd not in fellowship on earth?"

121

"Yea," answer'd I: "nor here a reason needs."

"And may that be, if different estates Grow not of different duties in your life? Consult your teacher,* and he tells you 'no."

Thus did he come, deducing to this point,
And then concluded: "For this cause behoves,
The roots, from whence your operations come,
Must differ. Therefore one is Solon born;
Another, Xerxes; and Melchisidec
A third; and he a fourth, whose airy voyage
Cost him his son.† In her circuitous course,
Nature, that is the seal to mortal wax,
Doth well her art, but no distinction owns
'Twixt one or other housebold. Hence befals
That Esau is so wide of Jacob; hence

^{*} Consult your teacher.] Aristotle, $\hat{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon i$ $\hat{\epsilon}\xi$ and μ olwy is π olis, i.e. τ . λ De Rep. lib. iii. cap. 4. "Since a state is made up of members differing from one another; (for even as an animal, in the first instance, consists of soul and body; and the soul, of reason and desire; and a family, of man and woman; and property, of master and slave; in like manner a state consists both of all these, and besides these of other dissimilar kinds;) it in cessarily follows, that the excellence of all the members of the state cannot be one and the same.'

^{† ---} Whose airy voyage
Cost him his son. 1 Dædalus.

[‡] Esau is so wide of Jacob.] Genesis, xxv. 22. It must be recol-

Quirinus* of so base a father springs, He dates from Marshis lineage. Were it not That providence celestial overrul'd. Nature, in generation, must the path 140 Trac'd by the generator still pursue Unswervingly. Thus place I in thy sight That, which was late behind thee. But, in sign Of more affection for thee, 't is my will Thou wear this corollary. Nature ever, Finding discordant fortune, like all seed Out of its proper climate, thrives but ill. And were the world below content to mark And work on the foundation nature lays, It would not lack supply of excellence. 150 But ye perversely to religion strain Him who was born to gird on him the sword, And of the fluent phraseman make your king; Therefore your steps have wander'd from the paths."

lected, that whatever power may be attributed to the stars by our Po t, he does not suppose it to put any constraint on the freedom of the human will; so that chimerical as his opinion appears to us, it was, in a moral point of view at least, harmless.

^{*} Quirinus.] Romulus, born of so obscure a father, that his parentage was attributed to Mars.

CANTO IX.

ARGUMENT.

The next spirit, who converses with our Poet in the planet Venus, is the amorous Cunizza. To her succeeds Forco, or Folques, the Provengal bard, who declares that the soul of Rahab the harlot is there also; and then, hlaming the Pope for his neglect of the holy land, prognosticates some reverse to the papal power.

AFTER solution of my doubt, thy Charles,
O fair Clemenza,* of the treachery† spake,
That must befal his seed; but, "Tell it not,"
Said he, "and let the destin'd years come round."
Nor may I tell thee more, save that the meed
Of sorrow well-deserv'd shall quit your wrongs.

And now the visage of that saintly light! Was to the sun, that fills it, turn'd again, As to the good, whose plenitude of bliss Sufficeth all. O ye misguided souls! Infatuate, who from such a good estrange Your hearts, and bend your gaze on vanity,

* O fair Clemenza.] Daughter of Charles Martel, and second wife of Louis X. of France.

† The treachery.] He alludes to the occupation of the kingdom of Sieily by Robert, in exclusion of his hrother's son Carobert, or Charles Robert, the rightful heir. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. 112.

t That saintly light.] Charles Martel.

10

Alas for you!-And lo! toward me, next; Another of those splendent forms approach'd, That, by its outward bright'ning testified The will it had to pleasure me. The eves Of Beatrice, resting as before, Firmly upon me, manifested forth Approval of my wish. " And O," I cried, "Blest spirit! quickly be my will perform'd; 20 And prove thou to me,* that my inmost thoughts I can reflect on thee. Thereat the light, That yet was new to me, from the recess, Where it before was singing, thus began, As one who joys in kindness; "In that partt Of the depray'd Italian land, which lies Between Rialto and the fountain-springs Of Brenta and of Piava, there doth rise, But to no lofty eminence, a hill, From whence erewhile a firebrand did descend, 30 That sorely shent the region. From one root I and it sprang; my name on earth Cunizza;t

* Prove thou to me.] The thoughts of all created minds being seen by the Deity, and all that is in the Deity being the object of vision to beatified spirits, soch spirits must consequently see the thoughts of all created minds. Dante therefore requests of the spirit, who now approaches him, a proof of this truth with regard to his own thoughts. See v. 70.

† In that part. Between Rialto in the Venetian territory, and the sources of the rivers Brenta and Piava, is situated a castle called Romano, the birth-place of the famous tyrant rezolino or Azzolino, the brother of Cunizza who is now speaking. The tyrant we have seen in "the river of blood." Hell, canto xii v. 110.

‡ Cunizza.] The adventures of Cunizza, overcome by the influence of her star, are related by the chronicler Rolandino of Padoa, lib. i. cap. 3. in Muratori. Rer. It. Script tom. viii. p. 173. She cloped from her first husband, Richard of St. Boniface, in the company of Sordello. (see Porg. canto vi and vii.) with whom she is supposed to have cohabited before her marriage: then lived with a soldier of Trevigi, whose wife was living at the same

40

And here I glitter, for that by its light
This star o'ereame me. Yet I nought repine,*
Nor grudge myself the cause of this my lot;
Which haply vulgar hearts can scarce conceive.

"This† jewel, that is next me in our heaven,
Lustrous and costly, great renown hath left,
And not to perish, ere these hundred years
Five times‡ absolve their round. Consider thou,
If to excel be worthy man's endeavour,
When such life may attend the first. Yet they
Care not for this, the crowd¶ that now are girt
By Adice and Tagliamento, still

time in the same city; and on his being murdered by her brother the tyrant, was by her brother married to a nobleman of Braganzo: lastly, when he also had fallen by the same hand, she, after her brother's death, was again wedded in Verona.

* Yet I nought repine.] "I am not dissatisfied that I am not al-

lotted a higher place."

† This] Folco of Genoa, a celebrated Provensal poet, commonly termed Folques of Marseilles, of which place he was perhaps bishop. Many errors of Nostrodamus, concerning him, which have been followed by Crescimbeni, Quadrio, and Millot, are detected by the diligence of Tiraboschi. Mr. Mathias's edit. v. i. p. 18. All that appears certain, is what we are told in this Canto, that he was of Genoa; and by Petrarch, in the Triumph of Love, c. iv. that be was better known by the appellation he derived from Marseilles, and at last assumed the religious habit.

One of his verses is cited by Dante. De Vulg. Eloq. lib. ii. c. 6. ‡ Five times.] The five hundred years are elapsed and unless the Provengal MSS, should be brought to light, the poetical reputation of Folco must rest on the mention made of him by the more fortunate Italians.

| When such life may attend the first.] When the mortal life of man may be attended by so lasting and glorious a memory, which is a kind of second life.

¶ The crowd.] The people who inhabited the tract of country bounded by the rivers Tagliamento to the east and Adice to the west.

Impenitent, though scourg'd. The hour is near*
When for their stubbornness, at Padua's marsh
The water shall be chang'd, that laves Vicenza.
And where Cagnano meets with Sile, one†
Lords it, and bears his head aloft, for whom
The web‡ is now a-warping. Feltro|| too 50
Shall sorrow for its godless shepherd's fault,
Of so deep stain, that never, for the like,
Was Malta's¶ bar unclos'd. Too large should be
The skillet** that would hold Ferrara's blood,
And wearied he, who ounce by ounce would weigh it,
The which this priest,†† in show of party-zeal,
Courteous will give; nor will the gift ill suit
The country's custom. We descry‡‡ above

* The hour is near.] Cunizza foretels the defeat of Giacopo da Carrara and the Paduans, by Can Grande, at Vicenza, on the 18th September, 1314. See G. Villani. lib. ix. cap. 62.

† One.] She predicts also the fate of Ricca do da Camino, who is said to have been murdered at Trevigi, (where the rivers Sile and Cagnano meet) while he was engaged in playing at chess.

nd Cagnano meet) while he was engaged in playing at chess.

‡ The web.] The net, or snare, into which he is destined to fall.

Feltro. The Bishop of Feltro having received a number of

fugitives from Ferrara, who were in opposition to the Pope, under a promise of protection, afterwards gave them up; so that they were reconducted to that city, and the greater part of them there put to death.

Malta's.] A tower, either in the citadel of Padua, which, under the tyranny of Ezzolino, had been "with many a foul and midnight murder fed;" or (as some say) near a river of the same name, that falls into the lake of Bolsena, in which the Pope was accustomed to imprison such as had been guilty of an irremissible sin.

** The skillet.] The blood shed could not be contained in such a vessel, if it were of the usual size.

†† This priest.] The bishop, who, to show himself a zealous partizan of the Pope, had committed the abovementioned act of treachery. The commentators are not agreed as to the name of this faithless prelate.

We descry.] "We behold the things that we predict, in the mirrors of eternal truth."

Mirrors, ve call them thrones, from which to us Reflected shine the judgments of our God: Whence these our sayings we avouch for good."

60

She ended; and appear'd on other thoughts Intent, re-cnt'ring on the wheel she late Had left. That other joyance* meanwhile wax'd A thing to marvel at, in splendour glowing, Like choicest rubyt stricken by the sun. For, in that upper clime, effulgence | comes Of gladness, as here laughter; and below, As the mind saddens, murkier grows the shade, "God secth all; and in him is thy sight,"

70

Said I, "blest spirit! Therefore will of his Cannot to thee be dark Why then delays Thy voice to satisfy my wish untold: That voice, which joins the inexpressive song, Pastime of heav'n, the which those ardours sing. That cowl them with six shadowing wings outspread?

- six wings he wore to shade His lineaments divine.

Milton, P. L. b. v. 278.

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^{*} That other jouance. Folco.

[†] A thing to marvel at.] Preclara cosa. A Latinism according to Venturi; but the word "preclara" had been already naturalised by Guido Guinicelli:

Oro ed argento e ricche gioje preclare. See the Sonnet, of which a version has been given in a note to Purg. eanto xi. v. 96.

t Choicest ruby.] Balascio.

[|] Effulgence.] As joy is expressed by laughter on earth, so is it by an increase of splendour in Paradise; and, on the contrary, grief is betokened in Hell by augmented darkness.

I Six shadowing wings.] "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings." Isaiah, vi. 2.

Ante majestatis ejus gloriam cherubim senas habentes alas semper adstantes nou cessant clamare sanctus, sanctus, sanctus. Alberici Visio, § 39.

I would not wait thy asking, wert thou known To me, as throughly I to thee am known."

He, forthwith answ'ring, thus his words began: "The valley' of waters," widest next to that 80 Which doth the earth engarland, shapes its course. Between discordant shores, t against the sun Inward so far, it makes meridian | there, Where was before the liorizon Dwelt I upon the shore, 'twixt Ebro's stream And Macra's, I that divides with passage brief Genoan bounds from Tuscan. East and west Are nearly one to Begga** and my land Whose haven't erst was with its own blood warm. Who knew my name, were wont to call me Folco: 90 And I did bear impression of this heav'n, †! That now hears mine; for not with fiercer flame

^{*} The valley of waters.] The Mediterranean sea.

[†] That.] The great ocean.

¹ Discordant shores. | Europe and Africa.

Meridian] Extending to the east, the Mediterranean at last reaches the coast of Palestine, which is on its horizon when it enters the Straits of Gibraltar. "Wherever a man is," says Vellutello, "there he has, above his head, his own particular meridian circle."

Twixt Ebro's stream

And Macra's.] Ebro, a river to the west, and Macra, to the east of Genoa where Folco was born: others think that Marseilles and not Genoa is here described; and then Ebro must be understood of the river in pain.

^{**} Begga.] A place in Africa.

^{††} Whose haven.] Alluding to the terrible slaughter of the Genoese made by the Saracens in 936; for which event Vellutello refers to the history of Augustino Giustiniani. Those, who conceive that our Poet speaks of Marseilles, suppose the slaughter of its inhabitants made in the time of Julius Caesar to be alluded to.

^{‡‡} This heav'n.] The planet Venus, by which Folco declares himself to have been formerly influenced.

Glow'd Belus' daughter,* injuring alike Sichæus and Crensa, than did I, Long as it suited the unripen'd down That fledg'd my cheek; nor she of Rhodope, t That was beguiled of Demophoon; Nor Jove's son, t when the charms of lole Were shrin'd within his heart. And vet there bides No sorrowful repentance here, but mirth, 100 Not for the fault, (that doth not come to mind,) But for the virtue, whose o'erruling sway And providence have wrought thus quaintly. Here The skill is look'd into, that fashioneth With such effectual working, | and the good Discern'd, accruing to the lower world From this above. But fully to content Thy wishes all that in this sphere have birth, Demands my further parle. Inquire thou wouldst, Who of this light is denizen, that here 110 Beside me sparkles, as the sun-beam doth On the clear wave. Know then, the soul of Rahah I Is in that gladsome harbour; to our tribe United, and the foremost rank assign'd. She to this heav'n,** at which the shadow ends Of your sublunar world, was taken up, First, in Christ's triumph, of all souls redcem'd: For well behov'd, that, in some part of heav'n,

^{*} Belus' daughter.] Dido.

⁺ She of Khodope] Phyllis.

¹ Jove's son] Hercule's.

[|] With such effectual working.] All the editions, except the Nidobeatina, do not, as Lombardi affirms, read "contanto;" for Vellutello's of 1544 is certainly one exception.

[¶] Rahab.] Heb. xi. 31.

^{**} This heav'n.] "This planet of Venus, at which the shadow of the earth ends, as Ptolemy writes in his Almagest." Vellutelle.

She should remain a trophy, to declare The mighty conquest won with either palm;* 120 For that she favour'd first the high exploit Of Joshua on the holy land, whereof The Popet recks little now. Thy city, plant Of him, t that on his Maker turn'd the back, And of whose envying so much wo hath sprung, Engenders and expands the cursed flower. That hath made wander both the sheep and lambs, Turning the shepherd to a wolf. For this, The gospel and great teachers laid aside, The decretals, I as their stuft margins show, 130 Are the sole study Pope and Cardinals, Intent on these, ne'er journey but in thought To Nazareth, where Gabriel on'd his wings.

* With either palm.] By both his hands nailed to the cross.

† The Pope.] "Who cares not that the holy land is in the possession of the Saracens," See also canto xv. 136.

Ite superbi, O miseri Cristiani Consumando l'un l'altro e non vi caglia Che 'l sepolero di Cristo e in man di cani.

Petrarca, Trionfo della Fama, cap. ii.

‡ Of him.] Of Satan.

| The cursed flower.] The coin of Florence, called the floren; the covetous desire of which has excited the Pope to so much evil.

the covetous desire of which has excited the Pope to so much evil.

If the decretals.] The canon law. So in the De Monarchia, lib. iii. p. 137. "There are also a third set, whom they call Decretalists. These, alike ignorant of theology and philosophy, relying wholly on their decretals, (which I indeed esteem not unworthy of reverence) in the hope I soppose of obtaining for them a paramount influence, derogate from the authority of the empire. Nor is this to be wondered at, when I have heard one of them saying, and impudently maintaining, that traditions are the foundation of the faith of the church." He proceeds to confute this opinion, and concludes "that the church does not derive its authority from traditions, but traditions from the church:" necesses est, ut non ecclesiae a traditionibus, sed ah ecclesia traditionibus accedat authoritas."

Yet it may chance, erclong, the Vatican,*
And other most selected parts of Rome,
That were the grave of Peter's soldiery,
Shall be deliver'd from the adult'rous bond."

* The Vatican.] He alludes either to the death of Pope Boniface VIII. or, as Venturi supposes, to the coming of the Emperor Henry VII. into Italy; or else, according to the yet more probable conjecture of Lombardi, to the transfer of the holy see from Rom. to Avignon, which took place in the pontificate of Clement V.



CANTO X.

ARCHMENT.

Their next ascent carries them into the sun, which is the fourth heaven. Here they are encompassed with a wreath of blessed spirits, twelve in number. Thomas Aquinas, who is one of these, declares the names and endowments of the rest.

LOOKING into his first-born with the love,
Which breathes from both eternal, the first Might
Ineffable, where ever eye or mind
Can roam, bath in such order all dispos'd,
As none may see and fail to enjoy. Raise, then,
O reader! to the lofty wheels, with me,
Thy ken directed to the point,* whereat
One motion strikes on the other. There begin
Thy wonder of the mighty Architect,
Who loves his work so inwardly, his eye
Doth ever watch it. See, how thence oblique†
Brancheth the circle, where the planets roll

* The point.] "To that part of heaven," as Venturi explains it, "in which the equinoctial circle and the zodiac intersect each other, where the common motion of the heavens from east to west may be said to strike with greatest force against the motion proper to the planets: and this repercussion, as it were, is here the strongest, because the velocity of each is increased to the utmost by their respective distance from the poles. Such at least is the system of Dante."

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+ Oblique.] The zodiac.

To pour their wished influence on the world; Whose path not bending thus, in heav'n above Much virtue would be lost and here on earth All power well nigh extinct: or, from direct Were its departure distant more or less, I' the universal order, great defect Must, both in heav'n and here beneath, ensue.

Now rest thee, reader! on thy bench, and muse 20 Anticipative of the feast to come;
So shall delight make thee not feel thy toil.

Lo!! have set before thee; for thyself
Feed now: the matter l indite, henceforth
Demands entire my thought. Join'd with the part,†
Which late we told of, the great minister.†
Of nature, that upon the world imprints
The virtue of the heaven, and doles out
Time for us with his beam, went circling on
Along the spires,§ where || cach hour sooner comes; 30
And I was with him, weetless of ascent,
But as a man,¶ that weets his thought, ere thinking.

^{*} In heav'n above.] If the planets did not preserve t' at order in which they move, they would not receive nor transmit their due influences: and if the zodiac were not thus oblique; if towards the north it either passed, or went short of the tropic of Cancer, or else towards the south it passed, or went short of the tropic of Capreorn, it would not divide the seasons as it now does.

[†] The part] The abovementioned intersection of the equinoctial circle and the zodiac.

[‡] Minister.] The Sun.

[§] Along the spires] According to our Poet's system, as the earth is motionless, the sun passes, by a spiral motion, from one tropic to the other.

[#] Where.] In which the sun rises every day earlier after the vernal equinox.

I But as a man.] That is, he was quite insensible of it.

60

For Beatrice, she who passeth on So suddenly from good to better, time Counts not the act, oh then how great must needs Have heen her brightness! What there was i' th' sun. (Where I had enter'd,) not through change of hue. But light transparent-did I summon up Genius, art, practise-I might not so speak. It should be e'cr imagin'd: yet believ'd 40 It may be, and the sight be justly crav'd. And if our fantasy fail of such height, What marvel, since no eye ahove the sun Hath ever travel'd? Such are they dwell here. Fourth family* of the Omnipotent Sire, Who of his spirit and of his offspringt shows: And holds them still enraptur'd with the view. And thus to me Beatrice: " Thank, oh thank The Sun of angels, him, who hy his grace To this perceptible hath lifted thee." 50 Never was heart in such devotion bound.

Nover was heart in such devotion bound,
And with complacency so absolute
Dispos'd to render up itself to God,
As mine was at these words: and so entire
The love for Him, that held me, it eclips'd
Beatrice in oblivion. Nought displeas'd
Was she, but smil'd thereat so joyously,
That of her laughing eyes the radiance brake
And scatter'd my collected mind abroad.

Then saw I a bright band, in liveliness
Surpassing, who themselves did make the crown,
And us their centre: yet more sweet in voice,
Than, in their visage, beaming. Cinctur'd thus,

^{*} Fourth Family] The inhabitants of the sun, the fourth planet.

⁺ Of his spirit and of his offspring.] The procession of the third, and the generation of the second person in the Trinity.

Sometime Latona's daughter we behold. When the imprognate air retains the thread That weaves her zone. In the celestial court, Whence I return, are many jewels found, So dear and beautiful, they cannot brook Transporting from that realm; and of these lights Such was the song,* Who doth not prune his wing To soar up thither, let hin't look from thence For tidings from the dumb. When singing thus, Those burning suns had circled round us thrice. As nearest stars around the fixed pole; Then seem'd they like to ladies, from the dance Not ceasing, but suspense, in silent pause, List'ning, till they have caught the strain anew; Suspended so they stood; and, from within, Thus heard I one, who spake: "Since with its beam The grace, whence true love lighteth first his flame, 80 That after doth increase by loving, shines So multiplied in thee, it leads thee up Along this ladder, down whose hallow'd steps None e'er descend, and mount them not again; Who from his phial should refuse thee wine To slake thy thirst, no less constrained were, Than water flewing not unto the sea. Thou fain wouldst hear, what plants are these, that

In the bright garland, which, admiring, girds
This fair dame round, who strengthens thee for heav'n.
I, then, § was of the lambs, that Dominic

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bloom

^{*} Such was the song.] The songs of these spirits was ineffable. It was like a jewel so highly prized, that the exportation of it to another country is prohibited by law.

[†] Let him.] Let him not expect any intelligence at all of that place, for it surpasses description.

[†] No less constrained.] "The rivers might as easily cease to flow towards the sea, as we could deny thee thy request."

[§] I, then.] "I was of the Dominican order."

Leads, for his saintly flock, along the way Where well they thrive, not swoln with vanity. He, nearest on my right hand, brother was, And master to me; Albert of Colognc* Is this; and, of Aquinum, Thomas† I. If thou of all the rest would'st be assur'd, Let thine eye, waiting on the words I speak, In circuit journey round the blessed wreath. That next resplendence issues from the smile Of Gratian,‡ who to either forum§ lent Such help, as favour wins in Paradise. The other, nearest, who adorns our quire,

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* Albert of Cologne.] Albertus Magnus was born at Laugingen, in Thuringia, in 1193, and studied at Paris and at Padua, at the latter of which places he entered into the Dominican order. He then taught theology in various parts of Germany, and particularly at Cologne. Thomas Aquinas was his favourite pupil. In 1200, he reluctantly accepted the bishopric of Ratisbon, and in two years after resigned it, and returned to his cell in Cologne, where the remainder of his life was passed in superintending the school, and in composing his voluminous works on divinity and natural science. He died in 1280. The absurd imputation of his having dealt in the magical art is well known; and his biographers take some pains to clear him of it.

† Of Aquinum, Thomas.] Thomas Aquinas, of whom Bucer is reported to have said, "Take but Thomas away, and I will overturn the church of Rome;" and whom Hooker terms the greatest among the school divines," (Eccl. Pol. b. iii. § 9.) was born of noble parents, who anxiously but vainly endeavoured to divert him from a life of celibacy and study. He died in 1274, at the age of forty-seven. Echard and Quetif. ibid. p. 271. See also Purga-

tory, canto xx. v. 67.

‡ Gratian.] "Gratian, a Benedictine monk belonging to the convent of St. Felix and Nabor, at Bologna, and by birth a Tuscan, composed, about the year 1130, for the use of the schools, an abridgment or epitome of canon law, drawn from the letters of the pontiffs, the decrees of councils, and the writings of the ancient doctors." Maclane's Mosheim, v. iii. cent. xii. part ii. cap i. § 6.

§ To either forum] "By reconciling," as Venturi explains it, "the civil with the canon law."

Was Peter,* he that with the widow gave†
To holy church his treasure. The fifth light,‡
Goodliest of all, is by such love inspir'd,
That all your world craves tidings of its doom:§
Within, there is the lofty light, endow'd
With sapience so profound, if truth be truth,
That with a ken of such wide amplitude
No second hath arisen. Next behold
That taper's radiance,|| to whose view was shown,
Clearliest, the nature and the ministry
Angelical, while yet in flesh it dwelt.

* Peter.] "Pietro Lomhardo was of obscure origin, nor is the place of his birth in Lombardy ascertained. With a recommendation from the Bishop of Lucca to St. Bernard, he went into France to continue his studies; and for that purpose remained some time at Rheims, whence he afterwards proceeded to Paris. Here his reputation was so great, that Pbilip, brother of Louis VII. being chosen bishop of Paris, resigned that dignity to Pietro, whose pupil he had been. He held his bishopric only one year, and died 1160. His Liber Sententarium is highly esteemed. It contains a system of scholastic theology, so much nore complete than any which had been yet seen, that it may be deemed an original work." Tiraboschi Storia della Lett. Ital. ton. iii lib. iv. cap. ii.

† That with the widow gave.] 'This alludes to the heginning of the Liber Sententiarum, where Peter says: "Cupiens aliquid de penuria ac tenuitate nostra cum paupercula in gazophilacium domini mittere," &c.

‡ The fifth light.] Solomon.

§ Its doom.] It was a common question, it seems, whether Solomon were saved or no.

|| That taper's radiance.] St. Dionysius, the Areopagite. "The famous Grecian fanatic, who gave himself out for Dionysius the Areopagite, disciple of St. Paul, and who, under the protection of this venerable name, gave laws and instructions to those that were desirous of raising their souls above all human things, in order to unite them to their great scource by sublime contemplation, lived most probably in this century (the fourth;) though some place him before, others after the present period." Madeline's Mosheim, v. i. cent. iv. p. 2. c. 3. § 12.

In the other little light serenely smiles
That pleader* for the christian temples, he,
Who did provide Augustin of his lore.
Now, if thy mind's eye pass from light to light,
Upon my praises following, of the eighth†
Thy thirst is next. The saintly soul, that shows 120
The world's deceitfulness, to all who hear him,
Is, with the sight of all the good that is,
Blest there. The limbs, whence it was driven, lie
Down in Cieldauro‡; and from martyrdom
And exile came it here. Lo! further on,
Where flames the' ardurous spirit of Isidore§;

* That pleader.] In the fifth century, Paulus Orosius " acquired a considerable degree of reputation by the history he wrote to refute the cavils of the pagaus against Christianity, and hy his books against the Pelagiaus and Priscillianists."—
Ibid. v. ii. cent v. p. ii. c. ii. § 11. A similar train of argument was pursued by Augustine, in his book De Civitate Dei.

Orosins is classed by Dante, in his treatise De Vulg. Eloq. lib. ii. cap. vi. as one of his favourite authors, among those "qui usi sunt altissimas prosas," "who have written prose with the greatest loftiness of style." The others are Cicero, Livy, Pliny, and Frontinus. Some commentators, with less probability, suppose that this seventh spirit is Saint Ambrose, and not Orosins.

† The eighth.] Boetins, whose book De Consolatione Philosophiæ excited so much attention during the middle ages, was born, as Tiraboschi conjectures, about 470. "In 524 he was cruelly put to death, by command of Theodoric, either on real or pretended suspiciou of his being engaged in a conspiracy." Della Lett. Hal. tom. iii. lib. i. cap. iv.

t Cieldauro.] Boetius was buried at Pavia, in the monastery

of S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro.

§ Isidore.] He was archbishop of Seville during forty years, and died in 635. See Mariana, hist. lib. vi. cap. vii.

Mosheim, whose critical opinions in general must be taken with some allowance, observes, that "his grammatical, theological, and historical productions discover more learning aud pedantry than judgment and taste." Of Bede*; and Richardt, more than man, erewhile, In deep discernment. Lastly this, from whom Thy look on me reverteth, was the beam Of one, whose spirit, on high musings bent, 130 Rebuk'd the ling'ring tardiness of death. It is the eternal light of Sigebertt, Who 'scap'd not envy, when of truth he argued, Reading in the straw-litter'd streets." Forthwith, As clock, that calleth up the spouse of God! To win her bridegroom's love at matin's hour, Each part of other fitly drawn and urg'd. Sends out a tinkling sound, of note so sweet, Affection springs in well-disposed breast; Thus saw I move the glorious wheel; thus heard Voice answ'ring voice, so musical and soft, 141 It can be known but where day endless shines.

^{*} Bede.] Bede, whose virtues obtained him the appellation of the Venerable, was born in 672, at Wermouth and Jarrow, in the bishopric of Durham, and died in 735. Invited to Rome by Pope Sergius I he preferred passing almost the whole of his life in the seclusion of a monastery. A catalogue of his numerous writings may be seen in Kippis's Biographia Britannica, vol. ii.

[†] Richard.] Richard of St. Victor, a native either of Scotland or Ireland, was canon and prior of the monastery of that name at Paris; and died in 1173. "He was at the head of the Mystics in this century; and his treatise, entitled the Mystical Ark, which contains as it were the marrow of this kind of theology, was received with the greatest avidity." Maclaine's Mosheim. v. iii. cent. xii. p. ii. c. ii. § 23.

[‡] Sigebert.] "A monk of the abbey of Gemblours, who was in high repute at the end of the eleventh, and beginning of the twelfth century." Dict. de Moreri.

[§] The straw-litter'd street.] The name of a street in Paris: the "Rue de Fouarre."

[|] The spouse of God.] The church.

CANTO XI.

ARGUMENT.

Thomas Aquinas enters at large into the life and character of St. Francis; and then solves one of two difficulties, which he perceives to have risen in Dante's mind from what he had heard in the last canto.

O fond anxiety of mortal men! How vain and inconclusive arguments Are those, which make thec beat thy wings below. For statutes one, and one for aphorisms* Was hunting; this the priesthood follow'd; that, By force or sophistry, aspir'd to rule; To rob, another; and another sought, By civil business, wealth; one, moiling, lay Tangled in net of sensual delight; And one to wistless indolence resign'd; 10 What time from all these empty things escap'd, With Beatrice, I thus gloriously Was rais'd aloft, and made the guest of heav'n. They of the circle to that point, each one. Where erst it was, had turn'd; and steady glow'd,

As candle in his socket. Then within

^{*} Aphorisms.] The study of medicine.

The lustre*, that erewhile bespake me, smiling With merer gladness, heard I thus begin:

"E'en as his beam illumes me, so I look
Into the' eternal light, and clearly mark
Thy thoughts, from whence they rise. Thou art
in doubt,

And wouldst, that I should bolt my words afresh In such plain open phrase, as may be smooth To thy perception, where I told thee late That 'well they thrive;' and that 'no second such;

Hath risen,' which no small distinction needs.

"The providence, that governeth the world,
In depth of counsel by created ken
Unfathomable, to the end that shes,
Who with loud cries was 'spous'd in precious

blood,

Might keep her footing tow'rds her well-belov'd,
Safe in herself and constant unto him,
Hath two ordain'd, who should on either hand
In chief escort her: one, seraphic all
In fervency; for wisdom upon earth,
The other**, splendour of cherubic light.
I but of one will tell: he tells of both,
Who one commendeth, which of them soe'er
Be taken: for their deeds were to one end.

^{*} The lustre.] The spirit of Thomas Aquinas.

⁺ That' well they thrive.'] See the last Canto, v. 93.

^{‡ &#}x27; No second such.'] See the last Canto, v. 111.

[§] She.] The Church.

[|] Her well-belov'd.] Jesus Christ.

⁹ One.] Saint Francis.

^{**} The other.] Saint Dominic.

"Between Tupino, and the wave that falls 40 From blest Ubaldo's chosen hill, there hangs Rich slope of mountain high, whence heat and cold* Are wafted through Perugia's eastern gate; And Nocera with Gualdo, in it's rear, Mourn for their heavy voket. Upon that side, Where it doth break it's steepness most, arose A sun upon the world, as duly this From Ganges doth: therefore let none, who speak Of that place, say Ascesi; for it's name Were lamely so deliver'd; but the East‡, 50 To call things rightly, be it henceforth styl'd. He was not yet much distant from his rising, When his good influence 'gan to bless the earth. A dame, to whom none openeth pleasure's gate More than to death, was, 'gainst his father's wills, His stripling choice : and he did make her his, Before the spiritual court , by nuptial bonds. And in his father's sight: from day to day, Then lov'd her more devoutly. She, bereav'd Of her first husband , slighted and obscure, 60

^{*} Heat and cold.] Cold from the snow, and heat from the reflection of the sun.

⁺ Yoke.] Vellutello understands this of the vicinity of the mountain to Nocera and Gualdo: and Venturi (as I have taken it) of the heavy impositions laid on those places by the Perugians. For giogo, like the latin jugum, will admit of either sense.

[†] The East.] This is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Shakspeare.

^{§ &#}x27;Cainst his father's will.] In opposition to the wishes of his natural father.

[|] Before the spiritual court] He made a vow of poverty in the presence of the bishop and of his natural father.

f Her first husband.] Christ.

'Thousand and hundred years and more, remain'd Without a single suitor, till he came.

Nor aught avail'd, that, with Amyclas*, she
Was found unmov'd at rumour of his voice,
Who shook the world: nor aught her constant holdness

Whereby with Christ she mounted on the cross, When Mary stay'd beneath. But not to deal Thus closely with thee longer, take at large The lovers' titles—Poverty and Francis.

Their concord and glad looks, wonder and love, 70 And sweet regard gave birth to holy thoughts, So much that venerable Bernard† first Did bare his feet, and, in pursuit of peace So heavenly, ran, yet deem'd his footing slow. O hidden riches! O prolific good!

Egidius‡ bares him next, and next Sylvester§, And follow, both, the bridegroom; so the bride Can please them. Thenceforth goes he on his way, The father and the master, with his spouse,

* Amyclas.] Lucan makes Cæsar exclaim, on witnessing the secure poverty of the fisherman Amyclas:-

—O vitæ tuta facultas

Pauperis, angustique lares! O munera nondum
Intellecta deum! quibus hoc contingere templis,
Aut potuit muris, nullo trepidare tumultu,
Cæsarea pulsante manu? Phars. lib. v. 531.
O happy poverty! thou greatest good
Bestow'd by heaven, but seldom understood!
Here nor the cruel spoiler seeks his prey,
Nor ruthless armies take their dreadful way, &c. Rowe.

Nor ruthless arnnes take their dreadful way, &c. Rowe.

† Bernard.] Of Quintavalle; one of the first followers of
the saint.

§ Sylvester.] Another of his earliest associates.

[‡] Egidius.] The third of his disciples, who died in 1262. His work, entitled Verba Aurea, was published in 1534, at Antwerp. See Lucas Waddingus, Annales Ordinis Minoris, p. 5.

And with that family, whom now the cord* 80 Girt humbly: nor did abjectness of heart Weigh down his eve-lids, for that he was son Of Pietro Bernardonet, and by men In wond'rous sort despis'd. But royally His hard intention he to Innocenta Set forth: and, from him, first receiv'd the seal On his religion. Then, when numerous flock'd The tribe of lowly ones, that trac'd his steps. Whose marvellous life deservedly were sung In heights empyreal; through Honorius's hand 90 A second crown, to deck their Guardian's virtues, Was by the' eternal Spirit inwreath'd: and when He had, through thirst of martyrdom, stood up In the proud Soldan's presence, and there preach'd Christ and his followers, but found the race Unripen'd for conversion; back once more He hasted, (not to intermit his toil,) And reap'd Ausonian lands. On the hard rock¶, 'Twixt Arno and the Tyber, he from Christ Took the last signet**, which his limbs two years Did carry. Then, the season come that he, 101 Who to such good had destin'd him, was pleas'd

[•] Whom now the chord.] Saint Francis bound his body with a cord, in sign that he considered it as a beast, and that it required, like a beast, to be led by a halter.

⁺ Pietro Bernardone.] A man in a humble station of life at Assisi.

t Innocent.] Pope Innocent III.

[§] Honorius.] His successor Honorius III. who granted certain privileges to the Franciscans.

[¶] On the hard rock.] The mountain Alverna in the Apennine.
** The last signet.] Alluding to the stigmata, or marks resembling the wounds of Christ, said to have been found on the saint's body.

To' advance him to the meed, which he had earn'd By his self-humbling; to his brotherhood,
As their just heritage, he gave in charge
His dearest lady*; and enjoin'd their love
And faith to her; and, from her bosom, will'd
His goodly spirit should move forth, returning
To it's appointed kingdom; nor would have
His body† laid upon another bier.

"Think now of one, who were a fit colleague
To keep the bark of Peter, in deep sea,
Helm'd to right point; and such our Patriarch‡ was.
Therefore who follow him as he enjoins,
Thou mayst be certain, take good lading in.
But hunger of new viands tempts his flock§;
So that they needs into strange pastures wide
Must spread them: and the more remote from him
The stragglers wander, so much more they come
Home, to the sheep-fold, destitute of milk.

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There are of them, in truth, who fear their harm,
And to the shepherd cleave; but these so few,
A little stuff may furnish out their cloaks.

"Now, if my words be clear; if thou have ta'en Good heed; if that, which I have told, recal To mind; thy wish may be in part fulfill'd: For thou wilt see the plant from whence they split; And he shall see, who girds him, what that means, 'That well they thrive, not swoln with vanity.'"

^{*} His dearest lady] Poverty.

[†] His body.] He forbad any funeral pomp to be observed at his burial; and, as it is said, ordered that his remains should be deposited in a place where criminals were executed and interped

[†] Our Patriarch.] Saint Dominic, to whose order Thomas Aquinas belonged.

Mis flock.] The Dominicans.

CANTO XII.

ARGUMENT.

A second circle of glorified souls encompasses the first. Buonaventura, who is one of them, celebrates the praises of St. Dominic, and informs Dante who the other eleven are, that are in this second circle or garland.

Soon as it's final word the blessed flame*
Had rais'd for utterance, straight the holy millt
Began to wheel; nor yet had once revolv'd,
Or ere another, circling, compass'd it,
Motion to motion, song to song, conjoining;
Song, that as much our muses doth excel,
Our Syrens with their tuneful pipes, as ray
Of primal splendour doth it's faint reflex.

As when, if Juno bid her handmaid forth, Two arches parallel, and trick'd alike, Span the thin cloud, the outer taking birth From that within (in manner of that voice;

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* The blessed flame.] Thomas Aquinas.

+ The holy mill.] The circle of spirits.

† In manner of that voice.] One rainbow giving back the image of the other, as sound is reflected by Echo. that nymph who was melted away by her fondness for Narcissus, as vapour is melted by the sun. The reader will observe in the text not only a second and third simile within the first, but two mytho-

Whom love did melt away, as sun the mist.) And they who gaze, presageful call to mind The compact, made with Noah, of the world No more to be o'erflow'd; about us thus. Of sempiternal roses, bending, wreath'd Those garlands twain; and to the innermost E'en thus the' external answer'd. When the foot-

ing, And other great festivity, of song, 20 And radiance, light with light accordant, each Jocund and blythe, had at their pleasure still'd, (E'en as the eyes, by quick volition mov'd, Are shut and rais'd together,) from the heart Of one* amongst the new lights† mov'd a voice. That made me seem# like needle to the star, In turning to it's whereabouts; and thus

logical and one sacred allusion bound up together with the whole. Even after this accumulation of imagery, the two circles of spirits, by whom Beatrice and Dante were encompassed, are by a bold figure termed two garlands of never-fading roses. Indeed there is a fulness of splendour, even to prodi-

gality, throughout the beginning of this Canto.

* One.] Saint Buonaventura, general of the Franciscan order, in which he effected some reformation; and one of the most profound divines of his age. "He refused the archbishopric of York, which was offered him by Clement IV. but afterwards was prevailed on to accept the bishopric of Albano and a cardinal's hat. He was born at Bagnoregio or Bagnorea, in Tuscany, A. D. 1221, and died in 1274." Dict. Histor. par Chaudon et Delandine. Ed. Lyon. 1804.

† Amongst the new lights.] In the circle that had newly sur-

rounded the first.

† That made me seem.] "That made me turn to it, as the magnetic needle does to the pole."

& To it's whereabout. Al suo dove.

> The very stones prate of my whereabout. Shakspeare, Macbeth, act ii. sc. 1.

Began: "The love*, that makes me beautiful, Prompts me to tell of the' other guide, for whom Such good of mine is spoken. Where one is, The other worthily should also be; That as their warfare was alike, alike Should be their glory. Slow, and full of doubt, And with thin ranks, after it's banner mov'd The army' of Christ, (which it so dearly cost To reappoint,) when it's imperial Head, Who reigneth ever, for the drooping host Did make provision, thorough grace alone, And not through it's deserving. As thou heard'stt, Two champions to the succour of his spouse He sent, who by their deeds and words might join Again his scatter'd people. In that climet Where springs the pleasant west-wind to unfold The fresh leaves, with which Europe sees herself New-garmented; nor from those billows far, Beyond whose chiding, after weary course, The sun doth sometimes | hide him; safe abides The happy Callaroga , under guard Of the great shield, wherein the lion lies Subjected and supreme. And there was born

^{*} The love.] By an act of mutual courtesy, Buonaventura, a Franciscan, is made to proclaim the praises of St. Dominic, as Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican. has celebrated those of St. Francis, and in like manner each blames irregularities, not of the other's order, but of that to which himself belonged.

[†] As thou heard'st.] See the last Canto, v. 33.

[‡] In that clime.] Spain.

[§] Those billows] The Atlantic.

Sometimes.] During the summer solstice.

¶ Callaroga.] Between Osma and Aranda, in Old Castile, designated by the royal coat of arms.

The loving minion of the Christian faith*. The hallow'd wrestler, gentle to his own, And to his enemies terrible. So replete His soul with lively virtue, that when first Created, even in the mother's wombt, It prophesied. When, at the sacred font, The spousals were complete 'twixt faith and him, Where pledge of mutual safety was exchang'd, The damet, who was his surety, in her sleep Beheld the wondrous fruit, that was from him 60 And from his heirs to issue. And that such He might be construed, as indeed he was, She was inspir'd to name him of his owner, Whose he was wholly; and so call'd him Dominic. And I speak of him, as the labourer, Whom Christ in his own Garden chose to be His help-mate. Messenger he seem'd, and friend Fast-knit to Christ; and the first love he show'd.

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^{*} The loving minion of the Christian faith.] Dominic was born April 5, 1170, and died August 6, 1221. His birth-place Callaroga; his father and mother's manes, Felix and Joanna; his mother's dream; his name of Dominic, given him in consequence of a vision by a noble matron who stood sponsor to him, are all told in an anonymous life of the saint, said to be written in the thirteenth century, and published by Quetif and Echard. Scriptores Ordinis Predicatorum. Par, 1719. fol. tom. i. p. 25. These writers deny his having been an inquisitor, and indeed the establishment of the inquisition itself before the fourth Lateran council. Ibid. p. 88.

[†] In the mother's womb.] His mother, when pregnant with him, is said to have dreamt that she should bring forth a white and black dog with a lighted torch in it's mouth, which were signs of the habit to be worn by his order, and of his fervent zerd.

[†] The dame.] His godmother's dream was, that he had one star in his forehead and another in the nape of his neck, from which he communicated light to the east and the west.

Was after the first counsel* that Christ gave. Many a time+ his nurse, at entering, found 70 That he had ris'n in silence, and was prostrate, As who should say, 'My errand was for this.' O happy father! Felix# rightly nam'd. O favour'd mother! rightly nam'd Joanna: If that do mean, as men interpret its. Not for the world's sake, for which now they toil Upon Ostiense | and Taddeo's | lore. But for the real manna, soon he grew Mighty in learning: and did set himself

- · After the first counsel? "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me," Matth. xix. 21. Dominic is said to have followed this advice.
- † Many a time.] His nurse, when she returned to him, often found that he had left his bed, and was prostrate, and in prayer.

t Felix. 7 Feliz Gusman.

§ As men interpret it.] Grace or gift of the Lord.

| Ostiense.] Arrigo, a native of Susa formerly a considerable city in Piedmont, and cardinal of Ostia and Velletri, whence he acquired the name of Ostiense, was celebrated for his lectures on the five books of the Decretals. He flourished about the year 1250. He is classed by Frezzi with Accorso the Florentine.

> Poi Ostiense, e'l Fiorentino Accorso, Che fe le chiose, e dichiaro 'l mio testo, E alle leggi diede gran soccorso.

Il Quadrir. lib. iv. cap. 13. Taddeo. It is uncertain whether he speaks of the physician or the lawyer of that name. The former, Taddeo d'Alderotto, a Florentine, called the Hippocratean, translated the ethics of Aristotle into Latin; and died at an advanced age towards the end of the thirteenth century. The other, who was of Bologna, and celebrated for his legal knowledge, left no writings behind him.

To go about the vineyard, that soon turns 80 To wan and wither'd, if not tended well: And from the see*, (whose bounty to the just And needy is gone by, not through it's fault, But his who fills it basely,) he besought, No dispensation for commuted wrong, Nor the first vacant fortune;, nor the tenths That to God's paupers rightly appertain, But, 'gainst an erring and degenerate world, License to fight, in favour of that seeds From which the twice twelve cions gird thee round. Then, with sage doctrine and good will to help, 91 Forth on his great apostleship he far'd, Like torrent bursting from a lofty vein; And, dashing 'gainst the stocks of heresy, Smote fiercest, where resistance was most stout, Thence many rivulets have since been turn'd, Over the garden catholic to lead Their living waters, and have fed it's plants.

"If such, one wheel of that two-yoked car,
Wherein the holy church defended her,
And rode triumphant through the civil broil;

^{*} The see.] "The apostolic see, which no longer continues it's wonted liberality towards the indigent and deserving; not indeed through it's own fault, as it's doctrines are still the same, but through the fault of the pontiff who is seated in it."

[†] No dispensation.] Dominic did not ask license to compound for the use of unjust acquisitions by dedicating a part of them to pious purposes.

[†] Nor the first vacant fortune.] Not the first benefice that fell vacant.

[§] In favour of that seed.] "For that seed of the divine word, from which have sprung up these four-and-twenty plants, these holy spirits that now environ thee."

[|] One wheel.] Dominic; as the other wheel is Francis.

Thou canst not doubt it's fellow's excellence, Which Thomas*, ere my coming, hath declar'd So courteously unto thee. But the trackt. Which it's smooth fellies made, is now deserted: That, mouldy mother is, where late were lees. His family, that wont to trace his path, Turn backward, and invert their steps; erelong To rue the gathering in of their ill crop, When the rejected tares; in vain shall ask 110 Admittance to the barn. I question not§ But he, who search'd our volume, leaf by leaf, Might still find page with this inscription on't, 'I am as I was wont.' Yet such were not From Acquasparta nor Casale, whence, Of those who come to meddle with the text, One stretches and another cramps it's rule. Bonaventura's life in me behold, From Bagnoregio; one, who, in discharge Of my great offices, still laid aside 120 All sinister aim. Illuminato here,

* Thomas.] Thomas Aquinas.

[†] But the track.] "But the rule of St. Francis is already deserted: and the lees of the wine are turned into mouldiness."

[‡] Tares.] He adverts to the parable of the tarcs and the wheat.

[§] I question not.] "Some indeed might be found who still observe the rule of the order: but such would come neither from Casale nor Acquasparta." At Casale, in Monferrat, the discipline had been enforced by Uberto with unnecessary rigour; and at Acquasparta. in the territory of Todi, it had been equally relaxed by the Cardinal Matteo, general of the order. Lucas Waddingus, as cited by Lombardi, corrects the errors of the commentators who had confounded these two.

And Agostino* join me: two they were, Among the first of those barefooted meek ones, Who sought God's friendship in the cord: with them

Hugues of Saint Victor : Pietro Mangiadore ; And he of Spains in his twelve volumes shining; Nathan the prophet: Metropolitan

- Illuminato here.

And Agostino. Two among the earliest followers of St. Francis.

† Hugues of St. Victor.] Landino makes him of Pavia; Venturi calls him a Saxon; and Lomhardi, following Alexander Natalis, Hist. Eccl. Sæc. xi. cap. 6. art. 9, says that he was from Ypres. He was of the monastery of Saint Victor at Paris, and died in 1142, at the age of forty-four. His ten books, illustrative of the celestial hierarchy of Dionysius the Areopagite, according to the translation of Joannes Scotus, are inscribed to King Louis, son of Louis le Gros, by whom the monastery had heen founded. Opera Hug. de S. Vict. fol. Paris. 1536. tom. i. 329. "A man distinguished by the fecundity of his genius, who treated, in his writing, of all the branches of sacred and profane erudition that were known in his time, and who composed several dissertations that are not destitute of merit." Maclaine's Mosheim, Eccl, Hist. v. iii. cent. xii. p. 2. c. 2. 6. 23. I have looked into bis writings, and found some reason for this high eulogium.

‡ Pietro Mangiadore.] "Petrus Comestor, or the Eater. born at Troyes, was canon and dean of that church, and afterwards chancellor of the church of Paris. He relinquished these benefices to become a regular canon of St. Victor at Paris, where he died in 1198."-Chaucon et Delandine. Dict. Hist. Ed.

Lyon. 1804.

The work, by which he is best known, is his Historia Scolastica, which I shall have occasion to cite in the notes to Canto xxvi.

§ He of Spain.] " To Pope Adrian V. succeeded John XXI. a native of Lisbon; a man of great genius and extraordinary acquirements, especially in logic and in medicine, as his books written in the name of Peter of Spain, (by which be was known before he became pope) may testify. His life was not much longer than that of his predecessors, for he was killed at ViterChrysostom*; and Anselmo†; and, who deign'd To put his hand to the first art, Donatus‡.

Raban§ is here: and at my side there shines 130
Calabria's abbot, Joachim¶, endow'd

bo, by the falling in of the roof of his chamber, after he had been pontiff only eight months and as many days," A. D. 1277.

Mariana Hist. de Este. 1, xiv. c. 2.

* Chrysostom.] The eloquent Patriarch of Constantinople.

† Anselmo.] "Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born at Aosta, about 1034, and studied under Lanfranc, at the monastery of Bec in Normandy, where he afterwards devoted himself to a religious life in his twenty-seventh year. In three years he was made prior, and then abbot of that monastery; from whence he was taken, in 1093, to succeed to the archbishopric, vacant by the death of Lanfranc. He enjoyed this dignity till his death, in 1109, though it was disturbed by many dissensions with William II. and Henry I. respecting immunities and investitures. There is much depth and precision in his theological works" Tiraboschi. Stor. della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. iv. cap. 2.

Ibid. c. v, "It is an observation made by many modern writers, that the demonstration of the existence of God, taken from the idea of a Supreme Being, of which Des Cartes is thought to be the author, was so many ages back discovered and brought to light by Anselm. Leibnitz himself makes the remark, vol. v. Oper. p. 570. Edit, Genev, 1763."

‡ Donatus.] Ælius Donatus, the grammarian, in the fourth

eentury, one of the preceptors of St. Jerome.

§ Raban.] "He was made Archbishop of Mentz in 847. His Latino-Theotische Glossary of the Bible is still preserved in the imperial library at Vienna. See Lambesius. Comment. de Bibl. lib. ii. p. 416 and 932. Gray's Works, 4to. Lond. 1814. vol ii. p. 33.

"Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, is deservedly placed at the head of the Latin writers of this age." Mosheim. v. ii.

cent. ix. p. 2. c. 2. § 14.

[Joachim.] Abbot of Flora in Calabria; "whom the multitude revered as a person divinely inspired, and equal to the most illustrious prophets of ancient times." Mosheim. v. iii. cent. xiii. p. 2. c. 2. § 33.

With soul prophetic. The bright courtesy Of friar Thomas, and his goodly lore, Have mov'd me to the blazon of a peer* So worthy; and with me have mov'd this throng.

* A peer.] St. Dominie.

CANTO XIII.

ARGUMENT.

Thomas Aquinas resumes his speech. He solves the other of those doubts which he discerned in the mind of Dante, and warns him earnestly against assenting to any proposition without having duly examined it.

LET him*, who would conceive what now I saw, Imagine, (and retain the image firm As mountain rock, the whilst he hears me speak,) Of stars, fifteen, from midst the' etherial host Selected, that, with lively ray serene, O'ercome the massiest air: thereto imagine The wain, that, in the bosom of our sky, Spins ever on its axle night and day, With the bright summit of that horn, which swells Due from the pole, round which the first wheel rolls, To' have rang'd themselves in fashion of two signs In heaven, such as Ariadne made,

12 When death's chill seiz'd her; and that one of them

^{*} Let him.] "Whoever would conceive the sight that now presented itself to me, must imagine to himself fifteen of the brightest stars in heaven, together with seven stars of Arcturus Major and two of Arcturus Minor, ranged in two circles, one within the other, each resembling the crown of Ariadne, and moving round in opposite directions."

Did compass in the other's beam; and both
In such sort whirl around, that each should tend
With opposite motion: and, conceiving thus,
Of that true constellation, and the dance
Twofold, that circled me, he shall attain
As 't were the shadow; for things there as much
Surpass our usage, as the swiftest heav'n
20
Is swifter than the Chiana*. There was sung
No Bacchus, and no Io Pæan, but
Three persons in the god-head, and in one
Person that nature and the human join'd.

The song fulfill'd its measure: and to us
Those saintly lights attended, happier made
At each new minist'ring. Then silence brake,
Amid the' accordant sons of Deity,
That luminary†, in which the wondrous life
Of the meck man of God‡ was told to me;
And thusit spake: "One carşo' the' harvest thresh'd,
And its grain safely stor'd, sweet charity
Invites me with the other to like toil.

"Thou know'st that in the bosom whence the rib

+ That luminary.] Thomas Aquinas.

† The meek man of God.] St. Francis. See canto xi. 25.

^{*} The Chiana.] See Hell, canto xxix. 45.

[§] One ear.] "Having solved one of thy questions, I proceed to answer the other. Thou thinkest then that Adam and Christ were both endued with all the perfection of which the human nature is capable; and therefore wonderest at what has been said concerning Solomon."

In the bosom.] "Thou knowest that in the breast of Adam, whence the rib was taken to make that fair cheek of Eve, which, by tasting the apple, brought death into the world; and also in the breast of Christ, which, being pierced by the lance, made satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; as much wisdom resided as human nature was capable of; and thou dost therefore wonder that I should have spoken of Solomon as the wises." See canto x. 105.

Was ta'en to fashion that fair cheek, whose taste All the world pays for; and in that, which pierc'd By the keen lance, both after and before Such satisfaction offer'd as outweighs Each evil in the scale; whate'er of light To human nature is allow'd, must all 40 Have by his virtue been infus'd, who form'd Both one and other: and thou thence admir'st In that I told thee, of beatitudes, A second there is none to his enclos'd In the fifth radiance. Open now thine eyes To what I answer thee: and thou shalt see Thy deeming and my saying meet in truth. As centre in the round. That* which dies not. And that which can die, are but each the beam Of that idea, which our sovereign Sire 50 Engendereth loving; for that lively light, Which passeth from his splendour, not disjoin'd From him, nor from his love triune with themt. Doth, through his bounty, congregate itself, Mirror'd, as 't were, in new existencess: Itself unalterable, and ever one.

"Descending hence unto the lowest powers,", Its energy so sinks, at last it makes
But brief contingencies; for so I name

^{*} That.] "Things, corruptible and incorruptible, are only emanations from the archetypal idea residing in the Divine Mind."

⁺ Light. The Word: the Son of God.

[#] His love triune with them.] The Holy Ghost.

[§] New existences.] Angels and human souls. If we read with some editions and many MSS. "nove" instead of "nuove," it should be rendered "nine existences," and then means "the nine heavens,"

^{||} The lowest powers.] Irrational life and brute matter,

Things generated, which the heav'nly orbs Moving, with seed or without seed, produce. Their wax, and that which moulds it*, differ much: And thence with lustre, more or less, it shows The' ideal stamp imprest: so that one tree, According to his kind, hath better fruit, And worse: and, at your birth, ye mortal men, Are in your talents various. Were the wax Molded with nice exactness, and the heav'n* In it's disposing influence supreme, The brightness of the sealt should be complete: 70 But nature renders it imperfect ever; Resembling thus the artist, in her work, Whose faltering hand is faithless to his skill. Therefore, if fervent love dispose, and mark The lustrous image of the primal virtue, There all perfection is vouchsaf'd; and such The clays was made, accomplish'd with each gift, That life can teem with : such the burden fill'd The virgin's bosom: so that I commend Thy judgment, that the human nature ne'er 80 Was, or can be, such as in them it was.

"Did I advance no further than this point;
'How then had he no peer?' thou might'st reply,
But, that what now appears not, may appear

^{*} Their wax, and that which moulds it.] Matter, and the virtue or energy that acts on it.

[†] The heav'n.] The influence of the planetary bodies.

[‡] The brightness of the seal.] The brightness of the divine idea before spoken of.

[§] Therefore.] Daniello, says Lombardi, has shown his sagacity in remarking that our poet intends this for a brief description of the Trinity: the primal virtue signifying the Father; the lustrous image, the Son; and fervent love, the Holy Ghost.

[[] The clay.] Adam.

Right plainly, ponder, who he was, and what (When he was bidden 'Ask,') the motive sway'd To his requesting. I have spoken thus, That thou mayst see, he was a king, who ask'd* For wisdom, to the end he might be king Sufficient: not, the number to search out 90 Of the celestial movers; or to know, If necessary with contingent e'er Have made necessity; or whether that Be granted, that first motion is; or if, Of the mid circle can by art be made Triangle, with it's corner blunt or sharp.

"Whence, nothing that, which I have said, and

this,

Thou kingly prudence and that ken¶ mayst learn, At which the dart of my intention aims.

* Who ask'd.] "He did not desire to know the number of the celestial intelligences, or to pry into the subtleties of logical, metaphysical, or mathematical science; but asked for that wisdom which might fit him for his kingly office."

+ The number.] This question is discussed by our poet him-

self in the Convito, p. 49.

† If necessary.] "If a premise necessarily true, with one not necessarily true, ever produced a necessary consequence: a question resolved in the negative by the art of logic, with that general rule, conclusio sequitur debiliorem partem."

Lombardi.

§ That first motion.] "If we must allow one first motion, which is not caused by other motion: a question resolved affirmatively by metaphysics, according to that principle, repugnat in causis processus in infinitum." Lombardi.

|| Of the mid circle.] "If in the half of the circle a rectilinear triangle can be described, one side of which shall be the diameter of the same circle, without it's forming a right angle with the other two sides; which geometry shows to be impossible." Lombardi.

That ken.] See canto x. 110.

And, marking clearly, that I told thee, 'Risen,' 100 Thou shalt discern it only hath respect To kings, of whom are many, and the good Are rare. With this distinction take my words; And they may well consist with that which thou Of the first human father dost believe, And of our well-beloved. And let this Henceforth be lead unto thy feet, to make Thee slow in motion, as a weary man, Both to the 'yea' and to the 'nay' thou seest not. For he among the fools is down full low, 110 Whose affirmation, or denial, is Without distinction, in each case alike. Since it befals, that in most instances Current opinion leans to false: and then Affection bends the judgment to her ply.

"Much more than vainly doth he loose from shore, Since he returns not such as he set forth, Who fishes for the truth and wanteth skill. And open proofs of this unto the world Have been afforded in Parmenides, 120 Melissus, Bryso*, and the crowd beside, Who journey'd on, and knew not whither; so did Sabellius, Ariust, and the other fools,

* --- Parmenides, Melissus, Bryso.]

For the singular opinions entertained by the two former of these heathen philosophers, see Diogenes Laertius, lib. ix. and Aristot. de Cœlo, lib. iii. cap. i. and Phys. lib. i. cap. ii. The last is also twice adduced by Aristotle (Anal. Post. lib. ii. cap. ix. and Rhet. lib. iii. cap. ii.) as affording instances of false reasoning. Our poet refers to the philosopher's refutation of them in the De Monarchia. lib. iii. p. 138.

⁺ Sabellius, Arius.] Well-known heretics.

Who, like to scymitars,* reflected back The scripture-image by distortion marr'd.

"Let not the people be too swift to judge: As one who reckons on the blades in field, Or e'er the crop be ripe. For I have seen The thorn frown rudely all the winter long, And after bear the rose upon it's top: 130 And bark, that all her way across the sea Ran straight and speedy, perish at the last E'en in the haven's mouth. Seeing one steal. Another bring his offering to the priest, Let not Dame Birtha and Sir Martin; thence Into heav'n's counsels deem that they can pry: For one of these may rise, the other fall."

* Scymitars.] A passage in the travels of Bertradon de la Brocquiere, translated by Mr. Johnes, will explain this allusion, which has given some trouble to the commentators. That traveller, who wrote before Dante, informs us, p. 138, that the wandering Arabs used their scymitars as mirrors.

+ Let not.] "Let not short-sighted mortals presume to decide on the future doom of any man, from a consideration of his present character and actions." This is meant as an answer to the doubts entertained respecting the salvation of Solomon.

See Canto x. 107.

† Dame Birtha and Sir Martin.] Names put generally for any persons who have more curiosity than discretion.

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CANTO XIV.

ARGUMENT.

Solomon, who is one of the spirits in the inner circle, declares what the appearance of the blest will be after the resurrection of the body. Beatrice and Dante are translated into the fifth heaven, which is that of Mars; and here behold the souls of those who had died fighting for the true faith, ranged in the sign of a cross, athwart which the spirits move to the sound of a melodious hymn.

From centre to the circle, and so back
From circle to the centre, water moves
In the round chalice, even as the blow
Impels it, inwardly, or from without.
Such was the image* glanc'd into my mind,
As the great spirit of Aquinum ceas'd;
And Beatrice, after him, her words
Resum'd alternate: "Need there is (though yet
He tells it to you not in words, nor e'en
In thought) that he should fathom to it's depth
Another mystery. Tell him, if the light,
Wherewith your substance blooms, shall stay with
you

Eternally, as now; and, if it doth,

^{*} Such was the image.] The voice of Thomas Aquinas proceeding from the circle to the centre; and that of Beatrice from the centre to the circle.

How when* ye shall regain your visible forms,
The sight may without harm endure the change,
That also tell." As those, who in a ring
Tread the light measure, in their fitful mirth
Raise loud the voice, and spring with gladder bound;
Thus, at the hearing of that pious suit,
The saintly circles, in their tourneying 20
And wond'rous note, attested new delight.

Whose laments, that we must doff this garb Of frail mortality, thenceforth to live Immortally above; he hath not seen The sweet refreshing of that heavenly shower.

Him, who lives ever, and for ever reigns In mystic union of the Three in One, Unbounded, bounding all, each spirit thrice Sang, with such melody, as, but to hear, For highest merit were an ample meed. 30 And from the lesser orb the goodliest light, With gentle voice and mild, such as perhaps The angel's once to Mary, thus replied: "Long as the joy of Paradise shall last, Our love shall shine around that raiment, bright As fervent; fervent as, in vision, blest: And that as far, in blessedness, exceeding, As it hath grace, beyond it's virtue, great. Our shape, regarmented with glorious weeds Of saintly flesh, must, being thus entire, 40 Show yet more gracious. Therefore shall increase Whate'er, of light, gratuitous imparts The Supreme Good; light, ministering aid,

^{*} When.] When ye shall be again clothed with your bodies at the resurrection.

[†] The goodliest light.] Solomon.

The better to disclose his glory: whence,
The vision needs increasing, must increase
The fervour, which it kindles; and that too
The ray, that comes from it. But as the gleed
Which gives out flame, yet in it's whiteness shines
More lively than that, and so preserves
It's proper semblance; thus this circling sphere 50
Of splendour shall to view less radiant seem,
Than shall our fleshly robe, which yonder earth
Now covers. Nor will such excess of light
O'erpower us, in corporeal organs made
Firm, and susceptible of all delight."

So ready and so cordial an "Amen"
Followed from either choir, as plainly spoke
Desire of their dead bodies; yet perchance
Not for themselves, but for their kindred dear,
Mothers and sires, and those whom best they
lov'd,

Ere they were made imperishable flame.

And lo! forthwith there rose up round about A lustre, over that already there; Of equal clearness, like the brightening up Of the horizon. As at evening hour Of twilight, new appearances through heav'n Peer with faint glimmer, doubtfully descried; So, there, new substances, methought, began To rise in view beyond the other twain, And wheeling, sweep their ampler circuit wide. 70

O genuine glitter of eternal Beam! With what a sudden whiteness did it flow, O'erpowering vision in me. But so fair, So passing lovely, Beatrice show'd, Mind cannot follow it, nor words express Her infinite sweetness. Thence mine eyes regain'd Power to look up; and I beheld myself,
Sole with my lady, to more lofty bliss*
Translated: for the star, with warmer smile
Impurpled, well denoted our ascent.

With all the heart, and with that tongue which speaks

The same in all, a holocaust I made
To God, befitting the new grace vouchsaf'd.
And from my bosom had not yet upsteam'd
The fuming of that incense, when I knew
The rite accepted. With such mighty sheen
And mantling crimson, in two listed rays
The splendours shot before me, that I cried,
"God of Sabaoth! that dost prank them thus!"

As leads the galaxy from pole to pole,
Distinguish'd into greater lights and less,
It's pathway, which the wisest fail to spell;
So thickly studded, in the depth of Mars,
Those rays describ'd the venerable signt,
That quadrants in the round conjoining frame.

Here memory mocks the toil of genius. Christ Beam'd on that cross; and pattern fails me now. But whose takes his cross, and follows Christ, Will pardon me for that I leave untold, When in the flecker'd dawning he shall spy 100 The glitterance of Christ. From horn to horn And 'tween the summit and the base, did move Lights, scintillating, as they met and pass'd.

^{*} To more lofty bliss.] To the planet Mars.

⁺ The venerable sign.] The cross, which is placed in the planet of Mars, to denote the glory of those who fought in the crusades.

Thus oft are seen with ever-changeful glance, Straight or athwart, now rapid and now slow, The atomies of bodies*, long or short, To move along the sunbeam, whose slant line Checkers the shadow interpos'd by art Against the noontide heat. And as the chime Of minstrel music, dulcimer, and harp 110 With many strings, a pleasant dinning makes To him, who heareth not distinct the note; So from the lights, which there appear'd to me, Gather'd along the cross a melody. That, indistinctly heard, with ravishment Possess'd me. Yet I mark'd it as a hymn Of lofty praises; for there came to me "Arise," and "Conquer," as to one who hears And comprehends not. Me such ecstacy O'ercame, that never, till that hour, was thing 120 That held me in so sweet imprisonment.

Perhaps my saying over bold appears, Accounting less the pleasure of those eyes, Whereon to look fulfilleth all desire. But he†, who is aware those living seals

* The atomies of bodies.]

As thicke as motes in the sun-beame.

Chaucer. Edit. 1603, fol. 35.

As thick and numberless,

As the gay motes that people the sunbeam.

Milton, Il Penseroso.

† He.] "He, who considers that the eyes of Beatrice became more radiant the higher we ascended, must not wonder that I do not except even them, as I had not yet beheld them since our entrance into this planet." Lombardi understands, by "living seals," "vivi suggelli," "the stars;" and this explanation derives some authority from the Latin notes on the Monte Casino MS. "id est coli imprimentes ut sigilla."

Of every beauty work with quicker force, The higher they are risen; and that there I had not turn'd me to them; he may well Excuse me that, whereof in my excuse I do accuse me, and may own my truth; That holy pleasure here not yet reveal'd, Which grows in transport as we mount aloof.

130

CANTO XV.

ARGUMENT.

The spirit of Cacciaguida, our poet's ancestor, glides rapidly to the foot of the cross; tells who he is; and speaks of the simplicity of the Florentines in his days, since then much corrupted.

TRUE love, that ever shows itself as clear
In kindness, as loose appetite in wrong,
Silenc'd that lyre harmonious, and still'd
The sacred chords, that are by heav'n's right hand
Unwound and tighten'd. How to righteous prayers
Should they not hearken, who, to give me will
For praying, in accordance thus were mute?
He hath in sooth good cause for endless grief,
Who, for the love of thing that lasteth not,
Despoils himself for ever of that love.

As oft along the still and pure serene,
At nightfull, glides a sudden trail of fire,
Attracting with involuntary heed
The eye to follow it, erewhile at rest;
And seems some star that shifted place in heav'n,
Only that, whence it kindles, none is lost,
And it is soon extinct: thus from the horn,
That on the dexter of the cross extends,

Down to it's foot, one luminary ran

From mid the cluster shone there; yet no gem 20

Dropp'd from it's foil: and through the beamy list,

Like flame in alabaster, glow'd it's course.

So forward stretch'd him (if of credence aught Our greater muse* may claim) the pious ghost Of old Anchises, in the' Elysian bower, When he perceiv'd his son. "O thou, my blood! O most exceeding grace divine! to whom, As now to thee, hath twice the heav'nly gate Been e'er unclos'd?" So spake the light whence I Turn'd me toward him; then unto my dame My sight directed: and on either side Amazement waited me; for in her eyes Was lighted such a smile, I thought that mine Had div'd unto the bottom of my grace And of my bliss in Paradise. Forthwith, To hearing and to sight grateful alike, The spirit to his proem added things I understood not, so profound he spake : Yet not of choice, but through necessity, Mysterious; for his high conception soar'd 40 Beyond the mark of mortals. When the flight Of holy transport had so spent it's rage, That nearer to the level of our thought The speech descended; the first sounds I heard Were, "Blest be thou, Triunal Deity! That hast such favour in my seed vouchsaf'd."

^{*} Our greater muse.] Virgil. Æn. lib. vi. 684.

Isque ubi tendentem adversum per gramina vidit
Ænean, alaeris palmas utrasque tetendit.

Venisti tandem, tuaque spectata parenti
Vicit iter durum pietas?

Then follow'd: "No unpleasant thirst though long", Which took me reading in the sacred book, Whose leaves or white or dusky never change, Thou hast allay'd, my son! within this light, 50 From whence my voice thou hear'st: more thanks to her.

Who, for such lofty mounting, has with plumes
Begirt thee. Thou dost deem thy thoughts to me
From Him transmitted, who is first of all,
E'en as all numbers ray from unity;
And therefore dost not ask me who I am,
Or why to thee more joyous I appear,
Than any other in this gladsome throng.
The truth is as thou deem'st; for in this life
Both less and greater in that mirror look,

In which thy thoughts, or ere thou think'st, are
shown.

But, that the love, which keeps me wakeful ever, Urging with sacred thirst of sweet desire, May be contented fully; let thy voice, Fearless, and frank and jocund, utter forth Thy will distinctly, utter forth the wish, Whereto my ready answer stands decreed."

I turn'd me to Beatrice: and she heard

Ere I had spoken, smiling an assent,

That to my well gave wings; and I began:

To each among your tribet, what time ye kenn'd

^{*} No unpleasant thirst, though long.] "Thou hast satisfied the long yet pleasing desire, which I have felt to see thee, through my knowledge of thee, obtained in the immutable decrees of the divine Providence."

[†] To each among your tribe.] "In you, glorified spirits, love and knowledge are made equal, because they are equal in

The nature, in whom nought unequal dwells, Wisdom and love were in one measure dealt; For that they are so equal in the sun, From whence ye drew your radiance and your heat, As makes all likeness scant. But will and means, In mortals, for the cause ye well discern, With unlike wings are fledge. A mortal, I Experience inequality like this; And therefore give no thanks, but in the heart 80 For thy paternal greeting. This howe'er I pray thee, living topaz! that ingemm'st This precious jewel; let me hear thy name."

"I am thy root*, O leaf! whom to expect Even, hath pleas'd me." Thus the prompt reply Prefacing, next it added: "He, of whom† Thy kindred appellation comes, and who, These hundred years and more, on it's first ledge Hath circuited the mountain, was my son, And thy great-grandsire. Well befits, his long 90 Endurance should be shorten'd by thy deeds.

"Florencet, within her ancient limit-mark,

God. But with us mortals it is otherwise, for we have often the will without the means of expressing our affections; and I can therefore thank thee only in my heart."

* I am thy root.] Cacciaguida, father to Alighieri, of whom

our poet was the great-grandson.

† He, of whom.] "Thy great-grandfather, Alighieri, has been in the first round of Porgatory more than a hundred years; and it is fit that thou hy thy good deserts shouldst endeavour to shorten the time of his remaining there." For what is known of Alghieri see Pelli. Memor. Opere di Dante. Ediz. Zatta. 1758. tom. iv. P. 2da. p. 21. His son Bellincione was living in 1266; and of him was born the father of our poet, whom Benvenuto da Imola calls a lawyer by profession. Pelli. ibid.

[†] Florence.] See G. Villani, lib. iii, cap. 2.

Which calls her still* to matin prayers and noon, Was chaste and sober, and abode in peace. She had no armlets and no head-tires then: No purfled dames; no zone that caught the eye More than the person did. Time was not yet, When tat his daughter's birth the sire grew pale, For fear the age and dowry should exceed. On each side, just proportion. House was none 100 Void of its family: nor yet had come Sardanapaluss, to exhibit feats Of chamber prowess. Montemalo vet O'er our suburban turret¶ rose; as much To be surpast in fall, as in its rising. I saw Bellincion Berti** walk abroad In leathern girdle, and a clasp of bone: And, with no artful colouring on her cheeks, His lady leave the glass. The sons I saw

^{*} Which calls her still.] The public clock being still within the circuit of the ancient walls.

⁺ When.] When the women were not married at too early

an age, and did not expect too large a portion,

[†] Void.] Through the civil wars and banishments. Or he may mean that houses were not formerly built merely for pomp and show, nor of greater size than was necessary for containing the families that inhabited them. For it has been understood in both these ways.

[§] Sardanapalus.] The luxurious monarch uf Assyria. Juvenal is here imitated, who uses his name fur an instance of effeminacy. Sat. x. 362.

[|] Montemalo.] Either an elevated spot hetween Rome and Viterbo; or Monte Mario, the site of the villa Mellini, commanding a view of Rome.

[¶] Our suburban turret.] Uccellatojo, near Florence, from whence that city was discovered. Florence had not yet vied with Rome in the grandeur of her public buildings.

^{**} Bellincion Berti.] Hell, canto xvi. 38. and notes.

Of Nerli, and of Vecchio*, well content
With unrob'd jerkin; and theirgood dames handling
The spindle and the flax: O happy they!
Each† sure of burial in her native land,
And none left desolate a-bed for France.
One wak'd to tend the cradle, hushing it
With sounds that lull'd the parent's infancy:
Another, with her maidens, drawing off
The tresses from the distaff, lectur'd them
Old tales of Troy, and Fesole, and Rome.
A Salterello and Cianghella‡ we
Had held as strange a marvel, as ye would
A Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.

"In such compos'd and seemly fellowship,
Such faithful and such fair equality,
In so sweet household, Mary || at my birth
Bestow'd me, call'd on with loud cries; and there,
In your old baptistery, I was made
Christian at once and Cacciaguida; as were,
My brethren Eliseo and Moronto.

^{*} Of Nerli, and of Vecchio.] Two of the most opulent families in Florence.

[†] Each.] "None fearful either of dying in banishment, or of being deserted by her husband on a scheme of traffic in France."

[‡] A Salterello and Cianghella.] The latter a shameless woman of the family of Tosa, married to Lito degli Alidosi of Imola; the former Lapo Salterello, a lawyer, with whom Dante was at variance. "We should have held an abandoned character, like these, as great a wonder, as ye would the contrary now." There is a sonnet by Lapo Salterello in Corbinelli's collection printed with the Bella Mano. Ed. Firenze. 1715. p. 150.

[|] Mary.] The Virgin was invoked in the pains of child-birth. Purgatory, canto xx, 21.

"From Valdipado* came to me my spouse; And hence thy surname grew. I follow'd then The emperor Conradt: and his knighthood he Did gird on me; in such good part he took My valiant service. After him I went To testify against that evil law. Whose peoplet, by the shepherd's fault, possess Your right, usurping. There, by that foul crew Was I releas'd from the deceitful world, Whose base affection many a spirit soils; And from the martyrdom came to this peace." 140

+ Conrad.] The Emperor Conrad III. who died in 1152. See G. Villant. lib. iv. 34.

^{*} Valdipado.] Cacciaguida's wife, whose family name was Alighieri came from Ferrara, called Val di Pado, from it's being watered by the Po.

[#] Whose people.] The Mahometans, who were left in possession of the Holy Land, through the supineness of the Pope. See canto ix. 123.



CANTO XVI.

ARGUMENT.

Caccinguida relates the time of his birth; and, describing the extent of Florence when he lived there, recounts the names of the chief families who then inhabited it. Its degeneracy, and subsequent disgrace, he attributes to the introduction of families from the neighbouring country and villages, and to their mixture with the primitive citizens.

O SLIGHT respect of man's nobility!
I never shall account it marvellous,
That our infirm affection here below
Thou mov'st to boasting; when I could not choose,
E'en in that region of unwarp'd desire,
In heav'n itself, but make my vaunt in thee.
Yet cloak thou art soon shorten'd; for that Time,
Unless thou be ek'd out from day to day,
Goes round thee with his shears. Resuming then,
With greeting* such as Rome was first to bear, 10
But since hath disaccustom'd, I began:

* With greeting.] The poet, who had addressed the spirit, not knowing him to be his ancestor, with a plain "Thou," now uses more ceremony, and calls him "Yon," according to a custom introduced among the Romans in the latter times of the empire.

And Beatrice*, that a little space
Was sever'd, smil'd; reminding me of her,
Whose cough embolden'd (as the story holds)
To first offence the doubting Guenever.

"You are my sire," said 1: "you give me heart Freely to speak my thought; above myself You raise me. Through so many streams with joy My soul is fill'd, that gladness wells from it; So that it bears the mighty tide, and bursts not. 20 Say then, my honour'd stem, what ancestors Were those you sprang from, and what years were mark'd

In your first childhood? tell me of the fold‡, That hath Saint John for guardian, what was then It's state, and who in it were highest seated?"

As embers, at the breathing of the wind,
Their flame enliven; so that light I saw
Shine at my blandishments; and, as it grew
More fair to look on, so with voice more sweet,
Yet not in this our modern phrase, forthwith
It answer'd: "from the days, when it was said,

^{*} Beatrice.] Lombardi observes, that in order to show os that his conversation with Cacciagoida had no connexion with sacred subjects. Beatrice is described as standing at a little distance; and her smiling at his formal address to his ancestor, makes him fall into a greater freedom of manner. See the next canto, v. 15.

⁺ Guenever.] Beatrice's smile reminded him of the female servant who, by her coughing, emholdened Queen Guenever to admit the freedoms of Lancelot. See Hell, canto v. 124.

[†] The fold.] Florence, of which John the Baptist was the parron saint.

[§] From the day.] From the incarnation of our Lord to the birth of Cacciaguida, the planet Mars had returned five hundred and eighty times to the constellation of Leo, with which it is supposed to have a congenial influence. As Mars then

'Hail, Virgin!' to the throes by which my mother, Who now is sainted, lighten'd her of me Whom she was heavy with, this fire had come Five hundred times and fourscore, to relume Its radiance underneath the burning foot Of its own lion. They, of whom I sprang, And I, had there our birth-place, where the last* Partition of our city first is reach'd By him that runs her annual game. Thus much 40 Suffice of my forefathers: who they were, And whence they hither came, more honourable It is to pass in silence than to tell. All those, who at that time were there, betwixt Marst and the Baptist, fit to carry arms,

completes his revolution in a period forty-three days short of two years, Cacciaguida was born about 1090. This is Lombardi's computation, and it squares well both with the old reading—

--- cinquecento cinquanta

E trenta fiate;

and with the time when Cacciaguida might have fallen fighting under Conrad III. who died in 1152.

* The last.] The city was divided into four compartments. The Elisci, the ancestors of Dante, resided near the entrance of that, named from the Porta S. Piero, which was the last reached by the competitor in the annual race at Florence. See

G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. x.

† Mars.] The Padre d'Aquino understands this to refer to the population of Florence in Gnido's time; for, according to him, "tra Marte e'l Batista," means the space between the statue of Mars placed on the Ponte Veccluo and the Baptistery; and Lombardi assents to this interpretation. Venturi supposes, that the portion of land so described would have been insufficient to hold the population which Florence contained at the supposed date of this poem, that is, in the year 1300; and agrees with the elder commentators, who consider the description as relating to time and not to place, and as indicating the two pe-

Were but the fifth of them this day alive. But then the citizen's blood, that now is mix'd From Campi and Certaldo and Fighine*, Ran purely through the last mechanic's veins. O how much better were it, that these people + 50 Were neighbours to you; and that at Galluzzo And at Trespiano ye should have your bound'ry; Than to have them within, and bear the stench Of Aguglione's hind, and Signa's‡, him, That hath his eve already keen for bart'rings, Had not the people , which of all the world Degenerates most, been step-dame unto Cæsar, But, as a mother to her son been kind, Such one, as hath become a Florentine, And trades and traffics, had been turned adrift 60 To Simifonte , where his grandsire ply'd

riods of heathenism and Christianity. See canto xiii. 144. It would not be easy to determine the real sense of a passage thus equivocal.

* Campi and Certaldo and Fighine.] Country places near

Florence.

- † That these people.] "That the inhabitants of the abovementioned places had not been mixed with the citizens; nor the limits of Florence extended beyond Galluzzo and Trespiano."
- ‡ Aguglione's hind, and Signa's.] Baldo of Aguglione, and Bonifazio of Signa.
- § His eye already keen for bart'ring.] See Hell, canto xxi. 40, and note.
- || Had not the people.] If Rome had continued in her allegiance to the emperor, and the Guelph and Ghibelline factions had thus been prevented; Florence would not have been polluted by a race of upstarts, nor lost the most the most respectable of her ancient families.
- ¶ Simifonte.] A castle dismantled by the Florentines. G. Villani, iib. v. cap. xxx. The individual here alluded to is no longer known.

The beggar's craft: the Conti were possess'd Of Montemurlo* still: the Cerchi still Were in Acone's parish: nor had haply From Valdigrieve pass'd the Buondelmonti. The city's malady hath ever source In the confusion of it's persons, as The body's, in variety of food: And the blind bull+ falls with a steeper plunge. Than the blind lamb: and oftentimes one sword 70 Doth more and better execution. Than five. Mark Luni; Urbisaglia + mark; How they are gone; and after them how go Chiusi and Sinigaglia§: and 't will seem No longer new, or strange to thee, to hear That families fail, when cities have their end. All things that appertain to' ye, like yourselves, Are mortal: but mortality in some Ye mark not; they endure so long, and you Pass by so suddenly. And as the moon! 80 Doth by the rolling of her heav'nly sphere. Hide and reveal the strand unceasingly; So fortune deals with Florence. Hence admire not At what of them I tell thee, whose renown

^{*} Montemurlo.] G. Villani, lib. v. cap. xxxi. relates that the Conti Guidi, not being able to defend their castle from the Pistoians, sold it to the state of Florence.

[†] The blind bull.] So Chaucer, Troilus and Cresseide, b. ii.
For swifter course cometh thing that is of wight
When it descendeth than done things light.

[†] Luni; Urbisaglia.] Cities formerly of importance; but then fallen to decay.

[§] Chiusi and Sinigaglia.] The same.

As the moon.] "The fortune of us, that are the moon's men, doth ehb and flow like the sea." Shakspeare, I Henry IV. act i. sc. 2.

Time covers, the first Florentines. I saw The Ughi*, Catilini, and Filippi, The Alberichi, Greci, and Ormanni, Now in their wane, illustrious citizens; And great as ancient, of Sannella him, With him of Arca saw, and Soldanieri, 90 And Ardinghi', and Bostichi. At the poopt, That now is laden with new felony So cumb'rous it may speedily sink the bark, The Ravignani sat, of whom is sprung The County Guido, and whose hath since His title from the fam'd Bellincion ta'en. Fair governance was yet an art well priz'd By him of Pressa: Galigaio show'd The gilded hilt and pommelt, in his house: The column, cloth'd with verreys, still was seen 100 Unshaken: the Sacchetti still were great, Giouchi, Sifanti, Galli, and Barucci, With them who blush to hear the bushel nam'd. Of the Calfucci still the branchy trunk Was in it's strength; and, to the curule chairs,

or, as some write it, the Billi.

^{*} The Ughi.] Whoever is curious to known the habitations of these and the other ancient Florentines, may consult G. Villani, lib, iv.

[†] At the poop.] The Cerchi, Dante's enemies, had succeeded to the houses over the gate of Saint Peter, formerly inhabited by the Ravignani and the Count Guido. G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. 10. Many editions read porta, 4 gate."—The same metaphor is found in Æschylus. Sup. 356, and is there also scarce understood by the critics.

[†] The gilded hilt and pommel.] The symbols of knighthood. § The column, cloth'd with verrey.] The arms of the Pigli,

With them.] Either the Chiaramontesi, or the Tosinghi; one of which had committed a fraud in measuring out the wheat from the public granary. See Purgatory, canto xii. 99.

Sizii and Arrigucci yet were drawn. How mighty them* I saw, whom, since, their pride Hath undone! And in all her goodly deeds Florence was, by the bullets of bright goldt, O'erflourish'd. Such the sires of thoset, who now. 110

As surely as your church is vacant, flock

Into her consistory, and at leisure There stall them and grow fat. The' o'erweening broods.

That plays the dragon after him that flees, But unto such as turn and show the tooth, Ay or the purse, is gentle as a lamb, Was on it's rise, but yet so slight esteem'd, That Ubertino of Donati grudg'd His father-in-law should yoke him to it's tribe. Already Caponsaccol had descended 120

Into the mart from Fesole: and Giuda

+ The bullets of bright gold.] The arms of the Abbati, as it is conjectured; or of the Lamberti, according to the autho-

rities referred to in the last note.

t The sires of those.] "Of the Visdomini, the Tosinghi, and the Cortegiani, who, being sprung from the founders of the bishopric of Florence, are the curators of its revenues, which

they do not spare, whenever it becomes vacant."

§ The' o'erweening brood.] The Adimari. This family was so little esteemed, that Ubertino Donato, who had married a daughter of Bellincion Berti, himself indeed derived from the same stock, (see note to Hell, canto xvi. 38.) was offended with his father-in-law, for giving another of his daughters in marriage to one of them.

[Caponsacco.] 'The family of Caponsacchi, who had removed from Fesole, lived at Florence, in the Mercato Vecchio-

^{*} Them.] The Uberti; according to the Latin note on the Monte Cassino MS, with which the editor of the extracts from these notes says that Benvenuto agrees.

And Infangato* were good citizens. A thing incredible I tell, though true : The gatewayt, nam'd from those of Pera, led Into the narrow circuit of your walls. Each one, who bears the sightly quarterings Of the great Baron; (he whose name and worth The festival of Thomas still revives), His knighthood and his privilege retain'd; Albeit one \, who borders them with gold, 130 This day is mingled with the common herd. In Borgo vet the Gualterotti dwelt, And Importuni]: well for it's repose,

And Infangato. Giuda Guidi and the family of Infangati. + The gateway. I Landino refers this to the smallness of the city: Vellutello, with less probability, to the simplicity of the people in naming one of the gates after a private family.

t The great Baron. The marchese Ugo, who resided at Florence, as lieutenant of the emperor Otho III. gave many of the chief families license to bear his arms. See G. Villani. lib. iv. cap. 2. where the vision is related, in consequence of which he sold all his possessions in Germany, and founded seven abbies; in one whereof, his memory was celebrated at Florence on St. Thomas's day. "The marquis, when hunting, strayed away from his people, and wandering through a fores; came to a smithy, where he saw black and deformed men tormenting others with fire and hammers; and, asking the meaning of this, he was told that they were condemned souls, who suffered this punishment, and that the soul of Marquis Ugo was doomed to suffer the same, if he did not repent. Struck with horror, he commended himself to the Virgin Mary; and soon after founded the seven religious houses."

§ Onc. Giano della Bella, belonging to one of the families thus distinguished, who no longer retained his place among the nobility, and had yet added to his arms a bordure or. See Macchiavelli. Ist. Fior. lib. ii. p. 86. Ediz. Giolito.

- Gualterotti dwelt,

And Importuni.] Two families in the compartment of the city called Borgo.

^{* ---} Ginda

Had it still lack'd of newer neighborhood*.

The house†, from whence your tears have had their spring,

Through the just anger, that hath murder'd ye
And put a period to your gladsome days,
Was honour'd; it, and those consorted with it.
O Buondelmonti! what ill counselling
Prevail'd on thee to break the plighted bond? 140
Many, who now are weeping, would rejoice,
Had God to Ema‡ giv'n thee, the first time
Thou near our city cam'st. But so was doom'd:
Florence! on that maim'd stone which guards the
bridge,

The victim, when thy peace departed, fell.

"With these and others like to them, I saw Florence in such assur'd tranquillity, She had no cause at which to grieve: with these Saw her so glorious and so just, that ne'er The lily from the lance had hung reverse, 150 Or through division been with vermeil dyed."

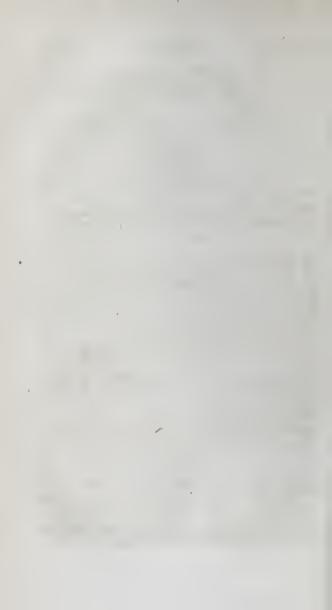
* Newer neighbourhood.] Some understand this of the Bardi; and others, of the Buendelmonti.

† The house.] Of Amidei. See notes to Canto xxviii. of Hell, 102.

† To Ema.] "It had been well for the city. if thy ancestor had been drowned in the Ema, when he crossed that stream on his way from Montebuono to Florence."

§ On that maim'd stone.] See Hell, canto xiii. 144. Near the remains of the statue of Mars, Buondelmonti was slain, as if he had been a victim to the god; and Florence had not since known the blessing of peace.

|| The lily.] "The arms of Florence had never hung reversed on the spear of her enemies, in token of her defeat; nor been changed from argent to gules;" as they afterwards were, when the Guelfi gained the predominance.



CANTO XVII.

ARGUMENT.

Cacciaguida predicts to our Poet his exile and the calamities he had to suffer; and, lastly, exhorts him to write the present poem

SUCH as the youth*, who came to Clymene,
To certify himself of that reproach
Which had been fasten'd on him, (he whose end
Still makes the fathers chary to their sons,)
E'en such was I; nor unobserv'd was such
Of Beatrice, and that saintly lamp†,
Who had erewhile for me his station mov'd;
When thus my lady: "Give thy wish free vent,
That it may issue, bearing true report
Of the mind's impress: not that aught thy words 10
May to our knowledge add, but to the end
That thou mayst use thyself to own thy thirst‡,
And men may mingle for thee when they hear."

"O plant, from whence I spring! rever'd and lov'd!

+ That saintly lamp.] Cacciaguida.

^{*} The youth.] Phaeton, who came to his mother Clymene, to inquire of her if he were indeed the son of Apollo. See Ovid. Met. lib. i. ad finem.

[†] To own thy thirst.] "That thou mayst obtain from others a solution of any doubt that may occur to thee."

30

Who soar'st so high a pitch, that thou as clear*,
As earthly thought determines two obtuse
In one triangle not contain'd, so clear
Dost see contingencies, ere in themselves
Existent, looking at the point† whereto
All times are present: I, the whilst I scal'd
With Virgil the soul-purifying mount‡,
And visited the nether world§ of woe,
Touching my future destiny have heard
Words grievous, though I feel me on all sides
Well squar'd¶ to fortune's blows. Therefore my
will
Were satisfied to know the lot awaits me.

The arrow, seen beforehand, slacks its flight."
So said I to the brightness, which erewhile
To me had spoken; and my will declar'd,
As Beatrice will'd, explicitly.
Nor with oracular response obscure,
Such as, or e'er the Lamb of God was slain,
Beguil'd the credulous nations; but, in terms
Precise, and unambiguous lore, replied
The spirit of paternal love, enshrin'd,
Yet in his smile apparent; and thus spake:

^{*} That thou as clear.] "Thou beholdest future events with the same clearness of evidence that we discern the simplest mathematical demonstrations."

⁺ The point. The divine nature.

[†] The soul-purifying mount.] See Purg. canto viii. 133, and canto xi. 140.

[§] The nether world.] See Hell, canto x. 77, and canto xv. 61.

| Well squar'd.] See Plato. Protagoras. Ed. Bipont. vol. iii.
p. 145, and Aristot. Rhetor. lib. iii. where Pietro Vettori, in his Commentary, p. 656, remarks: "Qois nescit Dantem etiam stuo in poemate tetragonum vocasse apposite hominem, qui adversis casibus non frangitur sed resistit fortiter ipsis?"

"Contingency, whose verge extendeth not Beyond the tablet of your mortal mold, Is all depictur'd in the' eternal sight; 40 But hence deriveth not necessity*, More than the tall ship, hurried down the flood, Is driven by the eye that looks on it. From thencet, as to the ear sweet harmony From organ comes, so comes before mine eve The time prepar'd for thee. Such as driv'n out From Athens, by his cruel stepdame's wiles, Hippolytus departed; such must thou Depart from Florence. This they wish, and this Contrive, and will ere long effectuate, there,§ Where gainful merchandize is made of Christ Throughout the livelong day. The common cry |, Will, as 't is ever wont, affix the blame Unto the party injur'd: but the truth Shall, in the vengeance it dispenseth, find A faithful witness. Thou shalt leave each thing Belov'd most dearly: this is the first shaft Shot from the bow of exile. Thou shalt prove How salt the savour is of other's bread: How hard the passage, to descend and climb

^{*} Necessity.] "The evidence with which we see casual events pourtrayed in the source of all truth, no more necessitates those events, than does the image, reflected in the sight by a ship sailing down a stream, necessitate the motion of the vessel."

[†] From thence.] "From the eternal sight; the view of the Deity himself."

[§] There.] At Rome, where the expulsion of Dante's party from Florence was then plotting, in 1300.

The common cry.] The multitude will, as usual, be ready to blame those who are the sufferers, whose cause will at last be vindicated by the overthrow of their enemies.

By other's stairs. But that shall gall thee most, 60 Will be the worthless and vile company, With whom thou must be thrown into these straits. For all ungrateful, impious all, and mad, Shall turn 'gainst thee: but in a little while, Their's*, and not thine, shall be the crimson'd brow. Their course shall so evince their brutishness, To' have ta'en thy stand apart shall well become thee.

"First refuge thou must find, first place of rest,
In the great Lombard's† courtesy, who bears,
Upon the ladder perch'd the sacred bird. 70
He shall behold thee with such kind regard,
That 'twixt ye two, the contrary to that
Which 'fals 'twixt other men, the granting shall
Forerun the asking. With him shalt thou see
That mortal‡, who was at his birth imprest
So strongly from this star, that of his deeds
The nations shall take note. His unripe age
Yet holds him from observance; for these wheels
Only nine years have compast him about.
But, ere the Gascon§ practice on great Harry#, 80

^{*} Theirs.] "They shall be ashamed of the part they have taken against thee." Lombardi, I think, is very unhappy in his conjecture, that rotta la tempia, a reading of the Nidobeatina edition, should be adopted, and that it may mean "the broken heads of his companions."

[†] The great Lombard.] Either Bartolommeo della Scala, or Alboino his brother, although our poet has spoken ambiguously of him in his Convito, p. 179.

[†] That mortal.] Can Grande della Scala, born under the influence of Mars, but at this time only nine years old. He was, as the other two, a son of Alberto della Scala.

[§] The Gascon.] Pope Clewoent V. See Hell. canto xix. 86, and note, and Par. canto xxxii. 53, and canto xxx. 141.

[[] Great Harry.] The Emperor Henry VII. See canto xxx.

Sparkles of virtue shall shoot forth in him, In equal scorn* of labours and of gold. His bounty shall be spread abroad so widely. As not to let the tongues, e'en of his foes, Be idle in its praise. Look thou to him. And his beneficence: for he shall cause Reversal of their lot to many people; Rich men and beggars interchanging fortunes. And thou shalt bear this written in thy soul. Of him, but tell it not:" and things he told 90 Incredible to those who witness them: Then added: "So interpret thou, my son, What hath been told thee. - Lo! the ambushment That a few circling seasons hide for thee. Yet envy not thy neighbors: time extends Thy span beyond their treason's chastisement."

Soon as the saintly spirit, by silence, mark'd,
Completion of that web, which I had stretch'd
Before it, warp'd for weaving; I began,
As one, who in perplexity desires

Counsel of other, wise, benign, and friendly:
"My father! well I mark how time spurs on
Toward me, ready to inflict the blow,
Which falls most heavily on him who most
Abandoneth himself. Therefore 't is good
I should forecast, that, driven from the place†
Most dear to me, I may not lose myself
All other by my song. Down through the world

^{*} In equal scorn.] See Hell, canto i. 98.

[†] The place.] Our poet here discovers both that Florence, much as he inveighs against it, was still the dearest object of his affections, and that it was not without some scruple he indulged his satirical vein.

Of infinite mourning; and along the mount, 109
From whose fair height my lady's eyes did lift me;
And, after, through this heav'n, from light to light;
Have I learnt that, which if I tell again,
It may with many wofully disrelish:
And, if I am a timid friend to truth,
I fear my life may perish among those,
To whom these days shall be of ancient date."
The brightness where enclosed the treasure*

The brightness, where enclos'd the treasure* smil'd,

Which I had found there, first shone glisteringly,
Like to a golden mirror in the sun;
Next answer'd: "Conscience, dimm'd or by it's own
Or other's shame, will feel thy saying sharp. 121
Thou, notwithstanding, all deceit remov'd,
See the whole vision be made manifest.
And let them wince, who have their withers wrung.
What though, when tasted first, thy voice shall
prove

Unwelcome; on digestion, it will turn
To vital nourishment. The cry thou raisest†,
Shall, as the wind doth, smite the proudest summits;
Which is of honour no light argument.
For this, there only have been shown to thee, 130
Throughout these orbs, the mountain, and the deep,
Spirits, whom fame hath note of. For the mind
Of him, who hears, is loth to acquiesce
And fix it's faith, unless the instance brought
Be palpable, and proof apparent urge."

* The treasure.] Cacciaguida.

[†] The cry thou raisest.] "Thou shalt stigmatize the faults of those who are most eminent and powerful; for men are naturally less moved by instances, adduced from among those who are in the lower classes of life."

CANTO XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Dante sees the souls of many renowned warriors and crusaders in the planet Mars; and then ascends with Beatrice to Jupiter, the sixth heaven, in which he finds the souls of those who had administered justice rightly in the world, so disposed, as to form the figure of an eagle. The Canto concludes with an invective against the avarice of the clergy, and especially of the pope.

Now* in his word, sole, ruminating, joy'd
That blessed spirit: and I fed on mine,
Temp'ring the sweet with bitter†. She meanwhile,
Who led me unto God, admonish'd: "Muse
On other thoughts: bethink thee, that near Him
I dwell, who recompenseth every wrong."

At the sweet sounds of comfort straight I turn'd; And, in the saintly eyes what love was seen, I leave in silence here: nor through distrust Of my words only, but that to such bliss 10 The mind remounts not without aid. Thus much Yet may I speak; that, as I gaz'd on her, Affection found no room for other wish.

^{*} Now.] The spirit of Cacciaguida enjoyed its own thoughts in silence.

[†] Temp'ring the sweet with bitter.]

Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy.

Shakspeare, As you like it, act 3. scene 3.

While the' everlasting pleasure, that did full On Beatrice shine, with second view From her fair countenance my gladden'd soul Contented; vanquishing me with a beam Of her soft smile, she spake: "Turn thee, and list. These eyes are not thy only Paradise."

As here, we sometimes in the looks may see The' affection mark'd, when that it's sway hath ta'en The spirit wholly: thus the hallow'd light*, To whom I turn'd, flashing, bewray'd its will To talk yet further with me, and began: "On this fifth lodgment of the treet, whose life Is from its top, whose fruit is ever fair And leaf unwith'ring, blessed spirits abide, That were below, ere they arriv'd in heav'n, So mighty in renown, as every muse 29 Might grace her triumph with them. On the horns Look, therefore, of the cross: he, whom I name, Shall there enact, as doth in summer cloud It's nimble fire." Along the cross I saw, At the repeated name of Joshua, A splendour gliding; nor, the word was said, Ere it was done: then, at the naming, saw, Of the great Maccabee‡, another move With whirling speed; and gladness was the scourge Unto that top. The next for Charlemagne And for the peer Orlando, two my gaze 40 Pursued, intently, as the eye pursues A falcon flying, Last, along the cross,

^{*} The hallow'd light.] In which the spirit of Cacciaguida was enclosed.

⁺ On this fifth lodgment of the tree.] Mars, the fifth of the heavens.

t The great Maccabee.] Judas Maccabæus.

William, and Renard* and Duke Godfrey† drew My ken, and Robert Guiscard‡. And the soul, Who spake with me, among the other lights Did move away, and mix; and with the quire Of heav'nly songsters prov'd his tuneful skill.

To Beatrice on my right I bent, Looking for intimation, or by word Or act, what next behov'd; and did descry 50 Such mere effulgence in her eyes, such joy, It pass'd all former wont. And, as by sense Of new delight, the man, who perseveres In good deeds, doth perceive, from day to day, His virtue growing; I e'en thus perceiv'd, Of my ascent, together with the heav'n, The circuit widen'd, noting the increase Of beauty in that wonder. Like the change In a brief moment on some maiden's cheek, Which, from its fairness, doth discharge the weight Of pudency, that stain'd it; such in her, 61 And to mine eyes so sudden was the change,

^{*} William, and Renard.] Probably, not, as the commentators have imagined, William II. of Orange, and his kinsman Raimbaud, two of the crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon, (Maimbourg, Hist. des Croisades, ed. Par. 1682, 12mo. tom. i. p. 96.) but rather the two more celebrated heroes in the age of Charlemagne. The former, William I. of Orange, supposed to have been the founder of the present illustrious family of that name, died about 808, according to Joseph de la Pise. Tableau de l'Hist. des Princes et Principauté d'Orange. Our countryman, Ordericus Vitalis, professes to give his true life, which had been misrepresented in the songs of the itinerant bards. "Vulgo canitur a joculatoribus de illo cantilena; sed jure præferenda est relatio autentica." Eccl. Hist. in Duchesne. Hist. Normann. Script. p. 598. The latter is better known by having been celebrated by Ariosto, under the name of Rinaldo.

[†] Duke Godfrey.] Godfrey of Bonillon. ‡ Robert Guiscard.] See Hell, canto xxviii. 12.

Through silvery* whiteness of that temperate star, Whose sixth orb now enfolded us. I saw, Within that Jovial cresset, the clear sparks Of love, that reign'd there, fashion to my view Our language. And as birds, from river banks Arisen, now in round, now lengthen'd troop, Array them in their flight, greeting, as seems, Their new-found pastures; so, within the lights, 70 The saintly creatures flying, sang; and made Now D. now I, now L, figur'd i' the' air. First, singing, to their notes they mov'd; then, one Becoming of these signs, a little while Did rest them, and were mute. O nymph divinet, Of Pegasean race! who souls, which thou Inspir'st, mak'st glorious and long-liv'd, as they Cities and realms by thee; thou with thyself Inform me; that I may set forth the shapes, As fancy doth present them: be thy power 80 Display'd in this brief song. The characterst, Vocal and consonant, were five-fold seven. In order, each, as they appear'd, I mark'd. Diligite Justitiam, the first,

† O nymiph divine.] "O muse, thou that makest thy votaries glorious and long-lived, as they, assisted by thee, make glorious and long-lived the cities and realms which they celebrate, now

enlighten me, &c."

† The characters.] Diligite justitiam qui judicatis terram. "Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth."

Wisdom of Solomon, c. i. 1.

^{*} Through silvery.] So in the Convito, "E'l ciel di Giove, &c." p. 74. "The heaven of Jupiter may be compared to geometry, for two properties: the one is, that it moves between two heavens repugnant to its temperature, as that of Mars and that of Saturn; whence Ptolemy, in the above cited book, says that Jupiter is a star of temperate complexion, between the coldness of Saturn and the heat of Mars: the other is, that, among all the stars, it shows itself white, as it were silvered."

Both verb and noun all blazon'd; and the' extreme, Qui judicatis terram. In the M Of the fifth word they held their station; Making the star seem silver streak'd with gold. And on the summit of the M, I saw Descending other lights, that rested there, 90 Singing, methinks, their bliss and primal good. Then, as at shaking of a lighted brand, Sparkles innumerable on all sides Rise scatter'd, source of augury to the' unwise*; Thus more than thousand twinkling lustres hence Seem'd reascending; and a higher pitch Some mounting, and some less, e'en as the sun, Which kindleth them, decreed. And when each one Had settled in his place; the head and neck Then saw I of an eagle, livelily 100 Grav'd in that streaky fire. Who painteth theret, Hath none to guide Him: of Himself he guides: And every line and texture of the nest Doth own from Him the virtue fashions it. The other bright beatitudet, that seem'd Erewhile, with lilied crowning, well content To over-canopy the M, mov'd forth, Following gently the impress of the bird.

Sweet star! what glorious and thick-studded gems
Declar'd to me our justice on the earth
110
To be the effluence of that heav'n, which thou,
Thyself a costly jewel, dost inlay.

^{*} The' unwise.] Who augur future riches to themselves in proportion to the quantity of sparks that fly from the lighted brand when it is shaken.

⁺ Who painteth there.] The Deity himself.

[†] Beatitude.] The band of spirits; for "beatitude" is here a noun of multitude.

Therefore I pray the Sovran Mind, from whom Thy motion and thy virtue are begun, That He would look from whence the fog doth rise, To vitiate thy beam; so that once more* He may put forth his hand 'gainst such, as drive Their traffic in that sanctuary, whose walls With miracles and martyrdoms were built.

Ye host of heaven, whose glory I survey! 120
O beg ye grace for those, that are, on earth,
All after ill example gone astray.
War once had for it's instrument the sword:
But now 't is made, taking the bread away†,
Which the good Father locks from none.—And
thou.

That writest but to cancel‡, think, that they,
Who for the vineyard, which thou wastest, died,
Peter and Paul, live yet and mark thy doings.
Thou hast good cause to cry, "My heart so cleaves
To him§, that liv'd in solitude remote, 130
And from the wilds was dragg'd to martyrdom,
I wist not of the fisherman nor Paul."

than to be paid for revoking them."

^{*} That once more.] "That he may again drive out those who buy and sell in the temple."

[†] Taking the bread away.] "Excommunication, or interdiction of the eucharist, is now employed as a weapon of warfare." † That writest but to cancel.] "And thou, Pope Boniface, who writest thy ecclesiastical censures for no other purpose

[§] To him.] The coin of Florence was stamped with the impression of John the Baptist; and, for this, the avaricious pope is made to declare that he felt more devotion than either for Peter or Paul. Lombardi, I know not why, would apply this to Clement V. rather than to Boniface VIII.

CANTO XIX.

ARGUMENT.

The eagle speaks as with one voice proceeding from a multitude of spirits, that compose it; and declares the cause for which it is exalted to that state of glory. It then solves a doubt, which our poet had entertained, respecting the possibility of salvation without belief in Christ, exposes the inefficacy of a mere profession of such belief; and prophesies the evil appearance, that many christian potentates will make at the day of judgment.

Before my sight appear'd, with open wings,
The beauteous image; in fruition sweet,
Gladdening the thronged spirits. Each did seem
A little ruby, whereon so intense
The sun-beam glow'd, that to mine eyes it came
In clear refraction. And that, which next
Befals me to portray, voice hath not utter'd,
Nor hath ink written*, nor in fantasy
Was e'er conceiv'd. For I beheld and heard
The beak discourse; and, what intention form'd 10
Of many, singly as of one express,
Beginning: "For that I was just and piteous,
I am exalted to this height of glory,
The which no wish exceeds: and there on earth

* Nor hath ink written.]

This joie ne maie not written be with inke.

Chaucer, Troilus and Cresseide, b. iii.

Have I my memory left, e'en by the bad Commended, while they leave it's course untrod."

Thus is one heat from many embers felt: As in that image many were the loves, And one the voice, that issued from them all: Whence I addrest them: "O perennial flowers 20 Of gladness everlasting! that exhale In single breath your odours manifold; Breathe now: and let the hunger be appeas'd, That with great craving long hath held my soul, Finding no food on earth. This well I know; That if there be in heav'n a realm, that shows In faithful mirror the celestial Justice. Your's without veil reflects it. Ye discern The heed, wherewith I do prepare myself To hearken; ye, the doubt, that urges me 30 With such inveterate craving." Straight I saw, Like to a falcon issuing from the hood, That rears his head, and claps him with his wings, His beauty and his eagerness bewraying; So saw I move that stately sign, with praise Of grace divine inwoven, and high song Of inexpressive joy. "He," it began, "Who turn'd his compass" on the world's extreme, And in that space so variously hath wrought, Both openly' and in secret; in such wise 40 Could not, through all the universe, display

—— In his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd
In God's eternal store, to circumseribe
This universe, and all created things.

Millon, P. L. b. vii. 227.

^{*} Who turn'd his compass.] "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth." Proverbs, viii. 27.

Impression of his glory, that the Word* Of his omniscience should not still remain In infinite excess. In proof whereof, He first through pride supplanted, who was sum Of each created being, waited not For light celestial; and abortive fell. Whence needs each lesser nature is but scant Receptacle unto that Good, which knows No limit measur'd by itself alone. 50 Therefore your sight, of the' omnipresent Mind A single beam, it's origin must own Surpassing far it's utmost potency. The ken, your world is gifted with, descends In the' everlasting Justice as low down As eye doth in the sea; which, though it mark The bottom from the shore, in the wide main Discerns it not; and ne'ertheless it is: But hidden through it's deepness. Light is none, Save that which cometh from the pure serene Of ne'er disturbed ether: for the rest, 'Tis darkness all: or shadow of the flesh, Or else it's poison. Here confess reveal'd That covert, which hath hidden from thy scarch The living justice, of the which thou mad'st Such frequent question; for thou saidst- A man Is born on Indus' banks, and none is there Who speaks of Christ, nor who doth read nor write; And all his inclinations and his acts, 70 As far as human reason sees, are good; And he offendeth not in word or deed:

^{*} The Word.] "The divine nature still remained incomprehensible. Of this Lucifer was a proof; for had he thoroughly comprehended it, he would not have fallen."

But unbaptiz'd he dies, and void of faith. Where is the justice that condemns him? where His blame, if he believeth not?'-What then, And who art thou, that on the stool wouldst sit To judge at distance of a thousand miles With the short-sighted vision of a span? To him*, who subtilizes thus with me, There would assuredly be room for doubt Even to wonder, did not the safe word 80 Of scripture hold supreme authority. "O animals of clay! O spirits gross! The primal willt, that in it itself is good, Hath from itself, the chief Good, ne'er been mov'd. Justice consists in consonance with it. Derivable by no created good, Whose very cause depends upon it's beam."

As on her nest the stork, that turns about Unto her young, whom lately she hath fed, Whiles they with upward eyes do look on her; 90 So lifted I my gaze; and, bending so, The ever-blessed image wav'd it's wings, Lab'ring with such deep counsel. Wheeling round It warbled, and did say: "As are my notes To thec, who understand'st them not; such is The' cternal judgment unto mortal ken."

Then still abiding in that ensign rang'd, Wherewith the Romans over-aw'd the world, Those burning splendours of the Holy Spirit

^{*} To him.] "He, who should argue, on the words I have just used, respecting the fate of those who have wanted means of knowing the Gospel, would certainly have cause enough to doubt, if he did not defer to the authority of scripture, which pronounces God to be thoroughly just."

† The primal will.] The divine will.

Took up the strain; and thus it spake again: 100
"None ever hath ascended to this realm,
Who hath not a believer been in Christ,
Either before or after the blest limbs
Were nail'd upon the wood. But lo? of those
Who call 'Christ, Christ*,' there shall be many found,

In judgment, further off from him by far,
Than such to whom his name was never known,
Christians like these the Æthiop† shall condemn:
When that the two assemblages shall part;
One rich eternally, the other poor.

"What may the Persians say unto your kings, When they shall see that volume; in the which All their dispraise is written, spread to view? There amidst Albert's works shall that be read, Which will give speedy motion to the pen, When Prague shall mourn her desolated realm. There shall be read the woe, that he doth work

† The Æthiop.] "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it." Matt. xii. 41.

§ Albert.] Purgatory, canto vi. 98.

¶ He.] Philip IV. of France, after the battle of Courtrai, 1302, in which the French were defeated by the Flemings,

^{*} Who call 'Christ, Christ.'] "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. vii. 21.

[†] That volume.] "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. xx. 12.

[#] Prague.] The eagle predicts the devastation of Bohemia by Albert, which happened soon after this time, when that emperor obtained the kingdom for his eklest son Rodolph. See Coxe's House of Austria, 4to. ed. vol. i. part i. p. 87.

With his adulterate money on the Seine, Who by the tusk will perish: there be read The thirsting pride, that maketh fool alike The' English and Scot*, impatient of their bound. There shall be seen the Spaniard's luxury+; The delicate living there, of the Bohemiant, Who still to worth has been a willing stranger. The halter of Jerusalems shall see A unit for his virtue : for his vices, No less a mark than million. Hell, who guards The isle of fire by old Anchises honor'd, Shall find his avarice there and cowardice; And better to denote his littleness, 130 The writing must be letters maim'd, that speak Much in a narrow space. All there shall know

raised the nominal value of the coin. This king died in consequence of his horse being thrown to the gruund by a wild boar, in 1314.

* The English and Scot.] He adverts to the disputes between John Baliol and Edward I. the latter of whom is commended

in the Purgatory, canto vii. 130.

† The Spaniard's luxury.] The cummentators refer this to Alonzo X. of Spain. It seems probable that the allusion is to Ferdinand IV. who came to the crown in 1295, and died in 1312, at the age of twenty-four, in consequence, as it was supposed, of his extreme intemperance. See Mariana. Hist. lib. xv. cap. 11.

† The Bohemian.] Winceslaus II. Purgatory, canto vii. 99. § The halter of Jerusalem.] Charles II. of Naples and Je-

rusalem, who was lame. See note to Purgatory, canto vii. 122. and xx. 78.

|| He.] Frederick of Sicily, son of Peter III. of Arragon. Purgatory, canto vii. 117. The isle of fire is Sicily, where was the tomb of Anchises. His uncle* and his brother's† filthy doings, Who so renown'd a nation and two crowns Have bastardiz'd‡. And they, of Portugal§ And Norway‡, they shall be expos'd, with him Of Ratza¶, who hath counterfeited ill The coin of Venice. O blest Hungary**, If thou no longer patiently abid'st

¶ ---- Him

^{*} His uncle.] James, king of Majorca and Minorca, brother to Peter III.

[†] His brother.] James II. of Arragon, who died in 1327. See Purgatory, canto vii. 117.

[†] Bastardiz'd.] "Bozze," according to Bembo, is a provencal word for "bastardo e non legitimo." Della Volg. Lingua. lib. i. p. 25. Ediz. 1544. Others have understood it to mean

[&]quot;one dishonoured by his wife."
§ Of Portugal.] In the time of Dante, Dionysius was king
of Portugal. He died in 1325, after a reign of uear forty-six
years, and does not seem to have deserved the stigma here fastened on him. See Mariana. lib. xv. cap. 18. Perhaps the re-

bellious son of Dionysius may be alluded to.

[[]Norway.] Haquin, king of Norway, is probably meant; who, having given refuge to the murderers of Eric VII. king of Denmark, A. D. 1288, commenced a war against his successor, Eric VIII. "which continued for nine years, almost to the utter ruin and destruction of both kingdoms." Modern Univ. Hist. vol. xxxii. D. 215.

Of Ratza.] One of the dynasty of the house of Nemagna, which ruled the kingdom of Rassia or Ratza, in Sclavonia, from 1161 to 1371, and whose history may be found in Mauro, Orbino. Regno degli Slavi. Ediz. Pesaro. 1601. Uladislaus appears to have been the sovereign in Dante's time: but the disgraceful forgery, adverted to in the text, is not recorded by the historian.

^{**} Hungary.] The kingdom of Hungary was about this time disputed by Carobert, son of Charles Martel, and Winceslaus, prince of Bohemia. son of Winceslaus II. See Coxe's House of Austria, vol. i. part i. p. 86. 4to, edit.

Thy ill-entreating: and, O blest Navarre*! 140
If with thy mountainous girdle† thou wouldst arm
thee.

In earnest of that day, e'en now are heard Wailings and groans in Famagosta's streets And Nicosia's‡, grudging at their beast, Who keepeth even footing with the rest§."

* Navarre.] Navarre was now under the yoke of France. It soon after (in 1328) followed the advice of Dante, and had a monarch of its own. Mariana. lib. xv. cap. 19.

+ Mountainous girdle. The Pyrenees.

t - Famagosta's streets

And Nicosia's.] Cities in the kingdom of Cyprus, at that time ruled by Henry II. a pusillanimous prince. Vertot. Hist, des Chev. de Malte. lib. iii. iv. The meaning appears to be, that the complaints made by those cities of their weak and worthless governor, may be regarded as an earnest of his condemnation at the last doom.

§ The rest.] "Wise poet!" thus Landino concludes his commentary on this canto; "to whom the human race owes obligations for having thus severely reprehended the faults of princes; since these are not, like the errors of private individuals, harmful to one or a few only; but injure all the country which they govern; and a single one frequently causes the ruin of whole nations."

CANTO XX.

ARGUMENT.

The eagle celebrates the praise of certain kings, whose glorified spirits form the eye of the hird. In the pupil is David; and, in the circle round it, Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, William II. of Sicily, and Ripheus. It explains to our Poet, how the souls of those whom he supposed to have had no means of believing in Christ, came to be in heaven; and concludes with an admonition against presuming to fathom the counsels of God.

When, disappearing from our hemisphere,
The world's enlightener vanishes, and day
On all sides wasteth; suddenly the sky,
Erewhile irradiate only with his beam,
Is yet again unfolded, putting forth
Innumerable lights wherein one shines*.
Of such vicissitude in heaven I thought;
As the great sign†, that marshaleth the world
And the world's leaders, in the blessed beak
Was silent: for that all those living lights,
Waxing in splendour, burst forth into songs,
Such as from memory glide and fall away.

10

^{*} Wherein one shines.] The light of the sun, whence he supposes the other celestial bodies to derive their light. Thus, in the Convito, p. 115. "Nullo sensibile, &c." "No sensible object in the world is more worthy to be made an example of the Deity, than the sun, which with sensible light enlightens first itself, and then all celestial and elementary bodies."

[†] The great sign.] The eagle, the Imperial ensign.

Sweet Love, that dost apparel thee in smiles! How lustrous was thy semblance in those sparkles, Which merely are from holy thoughts inspir'd.

After* the precious and bright beaming stones, That did ingem the sixth light, ceas'd the chiming Of their angelic bells; methought I heard The murmuring of a river, that doth fall From rock to rock transpicuous, making known 20 The richness of his spring-head: and as sound Of cittern, at the fret-board, or of pipe, Is, at the wind-hole, modulate and tun'd; Thus up the neck, as it were hollow, rose That murmuring of the eagle; and forthwith Voice there assum'd; and thence along the beak Issued in form of words, such as my heart Did look for, on whose tables I inscrib'd them.

"The part† in me, that sees and bears the sun In mortal eagles," it began, "must now 30 Be noted stedfastly: for, of the fires, That figure me, those, glittering in mine eye, Are chief of all the greatest. This, that shines Midmost for pupil, was the same who‡ sang The Holy Spirit's song, and bare about The ark from town to town: now doth he know The merit of his soul-impassion'd strains By their well-fitted guerdon. Of the five, That make the circle of the vision, he§,

^{*} After.] "After the spirits in the sixth planet (Jupiter) had ceased their singing."

[†] The part.] Lombardi well observes, that the head of the eagle is seen in profile, so that one eye only appears.

t Who.] David.

[§] He.] Trajan. See Purgatory, canto x. 68.

Who to the beak is nearest, comforted 40 The widow for her son: now doth he know. How dear it costeth not to follow Christ; Both from experience of this pleasant life, And of it's opposite. He next,* who follows In the circumference, for the over arch. By true repenting slack'd the pace of death: Now knoweth he, that the decrees of heav'nt Alter not, when, through pious prayer below, To-day's is made to-morrow's destiny. The other following, with the laws and me, To yield the shepherd room, pass'd o'er \ to Greece; From good intent, producing evil fruit: Now knoweth he, how all the ill, deriv'd From his well doing, doth not harm him aught: Though it have brought destruction on the world. That, which thou seest in the under bow, Was William, whom that land bewails, which weens For Charles and Frederick living: now he knows. How well is lov'd in heav'n the rightcous king:

+ The decrees of heaven. The eternal counsels of God are indeed immutable, though they appear to us men to be altered by

the prayers of the pious.

6 Pass'd o'er. 1 " Left the Roman state to the Pope, and trans-

ferred the seat of the Empire to Constantinople,"

| William.] William II. king of Sicily, at the latter part of the twelfth century. He was of the Norman line of sovereigns, and obtained the appellation of "the Good;" and, as the Poet says, his loss was as much the subject of regret in his dominions, as the presence of Charles II. of Anjou, and Frederic of Arragon, was of sorrow and complaint,

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^{*} He next.] Hezekiah.

The other following. Constantine. There is no passage, in which Dante's opinion of the evil that had arisen from the mixture of the civil with the ecclesiastical power, is more unequivocally declared.

Which he betokens by his radiant seeming. 60 Who, in the erring world beneath, would deem That Trojan Riphcus,* in this round, was set, Fifth of the saintly splendours? now he knows Enough of that, which the world cannot see; The grace divine: albeit e'en his sight Reach not it's utmost depth." Like to the lark, That warbling in the air expatiates long, Then, trilling out his last sweet melody, Drops, satiate with the sweetness; such appear'd That image, stampt by the' everlasting pleasure, 70 Which fashions, as they are, all things that be.

I, though my doubting were as manifest,
As is through glass† the hue that mantles it,
In silence waited not; for to my lips
"What things are these?" involuntary rush'd,
And forc'd a passage out: whereat I mark'd
A sudden lightening and new revelry.
The eye was kindled; and the blessed sign,
No more to keep me wond'ring and suspense,
Replied: "I see that thou believ'st these things, 80

* Trojan Ripheus.]

Ripheus justissimus unus Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui. Virg. Æn. lib. ii. 427.

Then Ripheus fell, the justest far of all
The sons of Troy.

Pitt.

The sons of Troy. Pitt.
† Through glass.] This is the only allusion I have remarked in our author to the art of painting glass. Tirabosebi traces that invention in Italy as far back as to the end of the eighth century. Stor. della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. iii. cap. vi. § ii. This, however, if we may trust Mr. Warton's judgment, must have been a sort of mosaic in glass. For to express figures in glass, or what we now call the art of painting in glass, that writer observes, "was a very different work; and I believe I can show it was brought from Constantinople to Rome before the tenth century, with other ornamental arts." History of English Poetry, vol. iii, p.xxii.

Because I tell them, but discern'st not how;
So that thy knowledge waits not on thy faith:
As one, who knows the name of thing by rote,
But is a stranger to it's properties,
Till other's tongue reveal them. Fervent love,
And lively hope, with violence assail
The kingdom of the heav'ns, and overcome
The will of the Most High; not in such sort
As man prevails o'er man: but conquers it,
Because 't is willing to be conquer'd; still,
Though conquer'd, by it's mercy, conquering.

"Those, in the eye who live the first and fifth, Cause thee to marvel, in that thou behold'st The region of the angels deck'd with them. They guitted not their bodies, as thou deem'st, Gentiles, but Christians; in firm rooted faith, This,* of the feet in future to be pierc'd, That, + of fect nail'd already to the cross. One from the barrier of the dark abyss, Where never any with good will returns, 100 Came back unto his bones. Of lively hope Such was the meed; of lively hope, that wing'd The prayers | sent up to God for his release, And put power into them to bend His will. The glorious Spirit, of whom I speak to thce, A little while returning to the flesh, Believ'd in him, who had the means to help; And, in believing, nourish'd such a flame Of holy love, that at the second death He was made sharer in our gamesome mirth. 110 The other, through the riches of that grace,

^{*} This.] Ripheus.

[†] That.] Trajan.

t The prayers.] The prayers of St. Gregory.

Which from so deep a fountain doth distil. As never eye created saw it's rising, Plac'd all his love below on just and right: Wherefore, of grace, God op'd in him the eye To the redemption of mankind to come; Wherein believing, he endur'd no more The filth of Paganism, and for their ways Rebuk'd the stubborn nations. The three nymphs,* Whom at the right wheel thou beheldst advancing, Were sponsors for him, more than thousand years Before baptizing. O how far remov'd, Predestination! is thy root from such As see not the First Cause entire: and ye, O mortal men! be wary how ye judge: For we, who see our Maker, know not yet The number of the chosen; and esteem Such scantiness of knowledge our delight: For all our good is, in that primal good, Concentrate; and God's will and our's are one." 130

So, by that form divine, was giv'n to me
Sweet medicine to clear and strengthen sight.
And, as one handling skilfully the harp,
Attendant on some skilful songster's voice
Bids the chord vibrate; and therein the song
Acquires more pleasure: so, the whilst it spake,
It doth remember me, that I beheld
The pair of blessed luminaries move,
Like the accordant twinkling of two eyes,
Their beamy circlets, dancing to the sounds.

^{*} The three nymphs.] Faith, Hope, and Charity. Furgatory canto xxix, 116.

[†] The pair.] Ripheus and Trajan.

CANTO XXI.

ARGUMENT.

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the seventh heaven, which is the Planet Saturn; wherein is placed a ladder, so lofty, that the top of it is out of his sight. Here are the souls of those who had passed their life in holy retirement and contemplation. Piero Damiano comes near them, and answers questions put to him by Dante; then declares who he was on earth; and ends by declaiming against the luxury of pastors and prelates in those times.

Again mine eyes were fix'd on Beatriee;
And, with mine eyes, my soul that in her looks
Found all contentment. Yet no smile she wore:
And, "Did I smile," quoth she, "thou wouldst
be straight

Like Semele when into ashes turn'd:

For, mounting these eternal palaee-stairs,

My beauty, which the loftier it elimbs,

As thou hast noted, still doth kindle more,

So shines, that, were no temp'ring interpos'd,

Thy mortal puissanee would from its rays

Shrink, as the leaf doth from the thunderbolt.

Into the seventh splendour* are we wafted,

* The seventh splendour.] The planet Saturn.

That, underneath the burning lion's breast,*
Beams, in this hour, commingled with his might.
Thy mind be with thine eyes; and, in them, mirror'd†

The shape, which in this mirror shall be shown."
Whoso can deem, how fondly I had fed
My sight upon her blissful countenance, [joy
May know, when to new thoughts I chang'd, what
To do the bidding of my heav'nly guide; 20
In equal balance, poising either weight.

Within the crystal, which records the name, (As it's remoter circle girds the world) Of that lov'd monarch, in whose happy reign No ill had power to harm, I saw rear'd up, In colour like to sun-illumin'd gold, A ladder, which my ken pursu'd in vain, So lofty was the summit; down whose steps I saw the splendours in such multitude Descending, every light in heav'n, methought, 30 Was shed thence. As the rocks, at dawn of day, Bestirring them to dry their feathers chill, Some speed their way a-field; and homeward some, Returning, cross their flight; while some abide, And wheel around their airy lodge: so seem'd That glitterance, wafted on alternate wing, As upon certain stair it came, and clash'd

^{*} The burning lion's breast.] The constellation Leo.

[†] In them, mirror'd.] "Let the form which thou shalt now behold in this mirror," the planet, that is, of Saturn, (soon after, v. 22, called the Crystal.) " be reflected in the mirror of thy sight."

[‡] In equal balance.] "My pleasure was as great in complying with her will, as in beholding her countenance,"

[§] Of that lov'd monarch.] Saturn. Compare Hell, canto xiv. 91. || That glitterance.] Quello sfavillar. That multitude of shining spirits, who, coming to a certain point of the ladder, made those different movements, which he has described as made by the birds.

Its shining. And one, ling'ring near us, wax'd So bright, that in my thought I said: "The love, Which this betokens me, admits no doubt." 40

Unwillingly from question I refrain: To her, by whom my silence and my speech Are order'd, looking for a sign: whence she. Who in the sight of Him, that seeth all. Saw wherefore I was silent, prompted me To' indulge the fervent wish; and I began: "I am not worthy, of my own desert. That thou shouldst answer me: but for her sake, Who hath vouchsaf'd my asking, spirit blest, That in thy joy art shrouded! say the cause, 50 Which bringeth thee so near: and wherefore, say, Doth the sweet symphony of Paradise Keep silence here, pervading with such sounds Of rapt devotion ev'ry lower sphere?" "Mortal art thou in hearing, as in sight:" Was the reply: "and what forbade the smile" Of Beatrice interrupts our song. Only to yield thee gladness of my voice, And of the light that vests me, I thus far Descend these hallow'd steps: not that more love 60 Invites me; for, lo! there aloft, + as much Or more of love is witness'd in those flames: But such my lot by charity assign'd, That makes us ready servants, as thou seest, To execute the counsel of the Highest."

"That in this court," said I, "O sacred lamp! Love no compulsion needs, but follows free The' eternal providence, I well discern:

^{*} What forbade the smile.] "Because it would have overcome thee."

^{*} There aloft.] Where the other souls were.

This harder find to deem, why, of thy peers, Thou only, to this office, were foredoom'd."

70

I had not ended, when, like rapid mill. Upon it's centre whirl'd the light; and then The love, that did inhabit there, replied: "Splendour eternal, piereing through these folds, It's virtue to my vision knits; and thus Supported, lifts me so above myself, That on the sov'reign essence, which it wells from, I have the power to gaze: and hence the joy, Wherewith I sparkle, equaling with my blaze The keenness of my sight. But not the soul.* That is in heav'n most lustrous, nor the seraph, That hath his eyes most fix'd on God, shall solve What thou hast ask'd: for in the' abyss it lies Of the' everlasting statute sunk so low, That no ereated ken may fathom it. And, to the mortal world when thou return'st, Be this reported: that none henceforth dare Direct his footsteps to so dread a bourn. The mind, that here is radiant, on the earth Is wrapt in mist. Look then if she may do Below, what passeth her ability When she is ta'en to heav'n." By words like these Admonish'd, I the question urg'd no more; And of the spirit humbly sued alone To' instruct me of it's state, "'Twixt either shoret Of Italy, nor distant from thy land, A stony ridget ariseth; in such sort,

^{*} Not the soul.] The particular ends of Providence being concealed from the very angels themselves.

^{†&#}x27;Twixt either shore.] Between the Adriatic gulf and the Mediterranean sea.

^{\$} A stony ridge.] A part of the Apennine. Gibbo is literally a

The thunder doth not lift his voice so high. They call it Catria: * at whose foot, a cell Is sacred to the lonely Eremite; 100 For worship set apart and holy rites." A third time thus it spake; then added: "There So firmly to God's service I adher'd. That with no costlier viands than the juice Of olives, casily I pass'd the heats Of summer and the winter frosts; content-In heav'n-ward musings. Rich were the return's And fertile, which that cloister once was us'd To render to these heavens: now 't is fall'n Into a waste so empty, that ere long 110 Detection must lay bare it's vanity. Pietro Damianot there was I y-clept: Pietro the sinner, when before I dwelt, Beside the Adriatic, in the house Of our blest Lady. Near upon my close Of mortal life, through much importuning

"hunch." Thus Archilochus calls the island of Thasus, ονου ραχις. See Gaisford's Poetæ Minores Græci, t. i. p. 298.

* Catria.] Now the abbey of Santa Croce, in the duchy of Urbino, about half way between Gubbio and La Pergola, Here Dante is said to have resided for some time. See the Life prefixed.

[†] Pietro Damiano.] "S. Pietro Damiano obtained a great and well-merited reputation, by the pains he took to correct the abuses among the clergy. Ravenna is supposed to have been the place of his birth, about 1007. He was employed in several important missions, and rewarded by Stephen IX. with the dignity of cardinal, and the bishopric of Ostia, to which, however, he preferred his former retreat in the Monastery of Fonte Avellana, and prevailed on Alexander II. to permit him to retire thither. Yet he did not long continue in this seclusion, before he was sent on other embassics. He died at Faenza in 1072. His letters throw much light on the obscure history of these times. Besides them, he has left several treatises on sacred and ecclesiastical subjects. His eloquence is worthy of a better age." Tiraboschi, Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. iv. cap. ii.

I was constrain'd to wear the hat,* that still From bad to worse it shifted.—Cephas† came; He came, who was the holy Spirit's vessel;‡ Barefoot, and lean; eating their hread, as chanc'd, 120 At the first table. Modern Shepherds need Those who on either hand may prop and lead them, So hurly are they grown, and from hehind, Others to hoist them. Down the palfrey's sides Spread their hroad mantles, so as both the beasts Are cover'd with one skin. O patience! thou That look'st on this, and dost endure so long."

I at those accents saw the splendours down From step to step alight, and wheel, and wax, Each circuiting, more heautiful. Round this § 130 They came, and stay'd them; utter'd then a shout So loud, it hath no likeness here: nor I Wist what it spake, so deaf'ning was the thunder.

The hat.] The Cardinal's hat.

⁺ Cephas.] St. Peter.

t The Holy Spirit's ressel.] St. Paul. See Hell, canto ii. 30. § Round this.] Round the spirit of Pietro Damiano.

CANTO XXII.

ARGUMENT.

He beholds many other spirits of the devout and contemplative; and amongst these is addressed by Saint Benedict, who, after disclosing his own name and the names of certain of his companions in bliss, replies to the request made by our Poet that he might look on the form of the saint, without that covering of splendour, which then invested it; and then proceeds, lastly, to inveigh against the corruption of the monks. Next Dante mounts with his heavenly conductress to the eighth heaven, or that of the fixed stars, which he enters at the constellation of the Twins; and thence looking back, reviews all the space he has past between his present station and the earth.

Astounder, to the guardian of my steps
I turn'd me, like the child, who alway runs
Thither for succour, where he trusteth most:
And she was like the mother, who her son
Beholding pale and breathless, with her voice
Sooths him, and he is cheer'd; for thus she spake,
Soothing me: "Know'st not thou, thou art in heav'n?
And know'st not thou, whatever is in heav'n,
Is holy; and that nothing there is done,
But is done zealously and well? Deem now,

What change in thee the song, and what my smile
Had wrought, since thus the shout had pow'r to
move thee;

In which, couldst thou have understood their prayers, The vengeance* were already known to thee, Which thou must witness ere thy mortal hour. The sword of heav'n is not in haste to smite, Nor yet doth linger; save unto his seeming, Who, in desire or fear, doth look for it. But elsewhere now I bid thee turn thy view; So shalt thou many a famous spirit behold."

Mine eyes directing, as she will'd, I saw
A hundred little spheres, that fairer grew
By interchange of splendour. I remain'd,
As one, who fearful of o'er-much presuming,
Abates in him the keenness of desire,
Nor dares to question; when, amid those pearls,
One largest and most lustrous onward drew,
That it might yield contentment to my wish;
And, from within it, these the sounds I heard.

"If thou, like me, beheldst the charity 50
That burns amongst us; what thy mind conceives,
Were utter'd. But that, ere the lofty bound
Thou reach, expectance may not weary thee;
I will make answer even to the thought,
Which thou hast such respect of. In old days,
That mountain, at whose side Cassino† rests
Was, on it's height, frequented by a race
Deceiv'd and ill dispos'd: and I it was,‡
Who thither earried first the name of Him,
Who brought the soul-subliming truth to man. 40

^{*} The vengcance.] Beatrice, it is supposed, intimates the approaching fate of Boniface VIII. See Purgatory, canto xx. 86.

[†] Cassino .] A eastle in the Terra di Lavoro.

[†] I it was.] "A new order of monks, which in a manner absorbed all the others that were established in the west, was instituted, A. D. 529, by Benedict of Nursia, a man of piety and reputation for the age he lived in." Maclaine's Mosheim. Eccles. Historiol. in. cent, vi. p. 2, C. 2, § 6.

And such a speeding grace shone over me,
That from their impious worship I reclaim'd
The dwellers round about, who with the world
Were in delusion lost. These other flames,
The spirits of men contemplative, were all
Enliven'd by that warmth, whose kindly force
Gives birth to flowers and fruits of holiness.
Here is Macarius;* Romoaldo† here;
And here my brethren, who their steps refrain'd
Within the cloisters, and held firm their heart." 50

I answering thus: "Thy gentle words and kind, And this the cheerful semblance I behold, Not unobservant, beaming in ye all, Have rais'd assurance in me; wakening it Full-blossom'd in my bosom, as a rose Before the sun, when the consummate flower Has spread to utmost amplitude. Of thee Therefore entreat I, father, to declare If I may gain such favour, as to gaze Upon thine image by no covering veil'd." 60

"Brother!" he thus rejoin'd, "in the last sphere; Expect completion of thy lofty aim:

^{*} Macarius.] There are two of this name enumerated by Mosheim among the Greek theologians of the fourth century, vol. i. cent. iv. p. 11. chap. 2. § 9. In the following chapter, § 10. it is said, "Macarius, an Egyptian monk, undoubtedly deserves the first rank among the practical writers of this time, as his works displayed, some few things excepted, the brightest and most lovely portraiture of sanctity and virtue."

[†] Romoaldo.] S. Romoaldo, a native of Rayenna, and the founder of the order of Camaldoli, died in 1027. He was the author of a commentary on the Psalms.

[‡] In the last sphere. The Empyrean, where he afterwards sees Saint Benedict, Canto xxxii. 30. Beatified spirits, though they have different heavens allotted them, have all their seat in that higher sphere.

For there on each desire completion waits, And there on mine; where every aim is found Perfect, entire, and for fulfilment ripe. There all things are as they have ever been: For space is none to bound; nor pole divides. Our ladder reaches even to that clime: And so, at giddy distance, mocks thy view. Thither the patriarch Jacob* saw it stretch 70 It's topmost round; when it appear'd to him With angels laden. But to mount it now None lifts his foot from earth: and hence my rule Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves; The walls, for abbey rear'd, turn'd into dens; The cowls, to sacks choak'd up with musty meal. Foul usury doth not more lift itself Against God's pleasure, than that fruit, which makes The hearts of monks so wanton: for whate'er Is in the church's keeping, all pertains To such, as sue for heav'n's sweet sake: and not To those, who in respect of kindred claim, Or on more vile allowance. Mortal flesh Is grown so dainty, good beginnings last not From the oak's birth unto the acorn's setting. His convent Peter founded without gold Or silver; I, with pray'rs and fasting, mine; And Francis, his in meek humility. And if thou note the point, whence each proceeds, Then look what it hath err'd to: thou shalt find 90 The white grown murky. Jordan was turn'd back: And a less wonder, than the refluent sea, May, at God's pleasure, work amendment here."

^{*} The Patriarch Incob.] "And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Gen. xxviii. 12.

So saying, to his assembly back he drew: And they together cluster'd into one; Then all roll'd upward, like an eddying wind.

The sweet dame beckon'd me to follow them:
And, by that influence only, so prevail'd
Over my nature, that no natural motion,
Ascending or descending here below,
Had, as I mounted, with my pennon vied.

So, reader, as my hope is to return Unto the holy triumph, for the which I oft-times wail my sins, and smite my breast; Thou hast been longer drawing out and thrusting Thy finger in the fire, than I was; ere The sign,* that followeth Taurus, I beheld, And enter'd it's precinct. O glorious stars! O light impregnate with exceeding virtue! To whom whate'er of genius lifteth me 110 Above the vulgar, grateful I refer; With ye the parent† of all mortal life Arose and set, when I did first inhale The Tuscan air; and afterward, when grace Vouchsaf'd me entrance to the lofty wheel‡ That in it's orb impels ye, fate decreed My passage at your clime. To you my soul Devoutly sighs, for virtue, even now, To meet the hard emprize that draws me on.

"Thou art so near the sum of blessedness,"
Said Beatrice, "that behoves thy ken
Be vigilant and clear. And, to this end,
Or ever thou advance thee further, hence

^{*} The sign.] The constellation of Gemini.

⁺ The parent.] The sun was in the constellation of the Twins at the time of Dante's birth.

^{, \$} The lofty wheel.] The eighth heaven; that, of the fixed stars.

Look downward, and contemplate, what a world Already stretch'd under our feet there lies:
So as thy heart may, in it's blithest mood,
Present itself to the triumphal throng, [joicing."
Which, through the ethereal concave, comes re-

I straight obey'd; and with minc eve return'd Through all the seven spheres; and saw this globe So pitiful of semblance, that perforce It mov'd my smiles: and him in truth I hold For wisest, who esteems it least; whose thoughts Elsewhere are fix'd, him worthicst call and best, I saw the daughter of Latona shine Without the shadow, whereof late I deem'd. That dense and rare were cause. Here I sustain'd The visage, Hyperion, of thy son;* And mark'd, how near him with their circles, round Move Maïa and Dione; there discern'd Jove's tempering 'twixt his sire and son; # and hence, Their changes and their various aspects, Distinctly scann'd. Nor might I not descry Of all the sev'n, how bulky each, how swift; Nor, of their several distances, not learn. This petty area (o'er the which we stride So fiercely,) as along the' eternal Twins I wound my way, appear'd before mc all. Forth from the havens stretch'd unto the hills. Then, to the beauteous eyes, mine eyes return'd.

[·] Ofthy son.] The sun.

⁺ Maia and Dione.] The planets Mercury and Venus: Dione being the mother of the latter, and Maia of the former deity.

[‡] Twixt his sire and son.] Betwixt Saturn and Mars.

CANTO XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

He sees Christ triumphing with his church. The Saviour ascends followed by his virgin Mother. The others remain with Saint Peter.

E'EN as the bird, who midst the leafy bower Has, in her nest, sat darkling through the night, With her sweet brood; impatient to descry Their wished looks, and to bring home their food, In the fond quest unconscious of her toil: She, of the time prevenient, on the spray, That overhangs their couch, with wakeful gaze Expects the sun; nor ever, till the dawn, Removeth from the east her eager ken: So stood the dame erect, and bent her glance 10 Wistfully on that region,* where the sun Abateth most his speed; that, seeing her Suspense and wond'ring, I became as one, In whom desire is waken'd, and the hope Of somewhat new to come fills with delight. Short space ensued; I was not held, I say,

* That region.] Towards the south, where the course of the sun appears less rapid, than when he is in the east or the west.

Long in expectance, when I saw the heav'n Wax more and more resplendent; and "Behold," Cried Beatrice, "the triumphal hosts Of Christ, and all the harvest gather'd in, 20 Made ripe by these revolving spheres." Meseem'd, That, while she spoke, her image all did burn; And in her eyes such fulness was of joy, As I am fain to pass unconstrued by.

As in the calm full moon, when Trivia* smiles, In peerless beauty, 'mid the' eternal nymphs,† That paint through all it's gulfs the blue profound; In bright pre-eminence so saw I there O'er million lamps a sun, from whom all drew Their radiance, as from our's the starry train: 30 And, through the living light, so lustrous glow'd The substance, that my ken endur'd it not.

O Beatrice! sweet and precious guide,
Who cheer'd me with her comfortable words:
"Against the virtue, that o'erpow'reth thee,
Avails not to resist. Here is the Might,‡
And here the Wisdom, which did open lay
The path, that had been yearned for so long,
Betwixt the heav'n and earth." Like to the fire,
That, in a cloud imprison'd, doth break out
Expansive, so that from it's womb enlarg'd,
It falleth against nature to the ground;
Thus, in that heav'nly banqueting, my soul
Outgrew herself; and, in the transport lost,
Holds now remembrance none of what she was.

^{*} Trivia.] A name of Diana.

[†] The' eternal nymphs.] The stars.

Those starry nymphs, which dance about the poleDrummond, Sonnet 10.

¹ The Might.] Our Saviour.

"Ope thou thine eyes, and mark me: thou hast seen Things, that empow'r thee to sustain my smile."

I was as one, when a forgotten dream* Doth come across him, and he strives in vain To shape it in his fantasy again; 50 When as that gracious boon was proffer'd me, Which never may be cancell'd from the book Wherein the past is written. Now were all Those tongues to sound, that have, on sweetest milk Of Polyhymnia and her sisters, fed And fatten'd; not with all their help to boot. Unto the thousandth parcel of the truth, My song might shadow forth that saintly smile, How merely, in her saintly looks, it wrought. And, with such figuring of Paradise. 60 The sacred strain must leap, like one that meets A sudden interruption to his road. But he, who thinks how ponderous the theme, And that 'tis laid upon a mortal shoulder, May pardon, if it tremble with the burden. The track, our vent'rous keel must furrow, brooks No unribb'd pinnace, no self-sparing pilot.

"Why doth my face," said Beatrice, "thus Enamour thee, as that thou dost not turn
Unto the beautiful garden, blossoming 70
Beneath the rays of Christ? Here is the rose,†
Wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate:

* A forgotten dream.]

---You might as well Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream. Wordsworth Hart Leap Well.

[†] The Rose.] The Virgin Mary, who, says Lombardi, is termed by the church, Rosa Mystica. "I was exalted like a palm-tree in Engaddi, and as a rose-plant in Jericho." Ecclesiasticus, xxiv. 14.

And here the lilies,* by whose odour known The way of life was follow'd." Prompt I heard Her bidding, and encounter'd once again The strife of aching vision. As, erewhile, Through glance of sun-light, stream'd through broken cloud.

Mine eves a flow'r-besprinkled mead have seen; Though veil'd themselves in shade: so saw I there Legions of splendours, on whom burning rays Shed lightnings from above; yet saw I not The fountain whence they flow'd. O gracious virtue! Thou, whose broad stamp is on them, higher up Thou didst exalt thy glory, + to give room To my o'erlabour'd sight; when at the name Of that fair flower, # whom duly I invoke Both morn and eve, my soul with all her might Collected, on the goodliest ardour fix'd. And, as the bright dimensions of the star In heav'n excelling, as once here on earth, 90 Where, in my eve-balls livelily pourtray'd: Lo! from within the sky a eresset fell, Circling in fashion of a diadem; And girt the star; and, hov'ring, round it wheel'd.

Whatever melody sounds sweetest here, And draws the spirit most unto itself, Might seem a rent cloud, when it grates the thunder: Compar'd unto the sounding of that lyre,

^{*} The lilies.] The Apostles. "And give ye a sweet savour as frankineense, and flourish as a lily." Ecclesiasticus, xxxix. 14. + Thou didst exalt thy glory.] The divine light retired upwards; to render the eyes of Dante more capable of enduring the spectacle which now presented itself.

^{1 ---} The name

Of that fair flower.] The name of the Virgin.

[&]amp; A cresset.] The angel Gabriel.

[#] That lyre.] By synecdoche, the lyre is put for the angel.

Wherewith the goodliest sapphire,* that inlays
The floor of heav'n, was crown'd. "Angelic Love
I am, who thus with hov'ring flight enwheel
The lofty rapture from that womb inspir'd,
Where our desire did dwell: and round thee so,
Lady of Heav'n! will hover; long as thou
Thy Son shalt follow, and diviner joy
Shall from thy presence gild the highest sphere."

Such close was to the circling melody: And, as it ended, all the other lights Took up the strain, and echoed Mary's name.

The robe,† that with it's regal folds enwraps 110 The world, and with the nearer breath of God Doth burn and quiver, held so far retir'd It's inner hem and skirting over us, That yet no glimmer of it's majesty Had stream'd unto me: therefore were mine eves Unequal to pursue the crowned flame, \$ That tow'ring rose, and sought the seeds it bore. And like to babe, that stretches forth it's arms For very eagerness toward the breast, After the milk is taken: so outstretch'd 120 Their wavy summits all the fervent band. Through zealous love to Mary: then, in view, There halted; and "Regina Coli" sang So sweetly, the delight hath left me never.

^{*} The goodliest sapphire.] The Virgin.

[†] The robe.] The ninth heaven, the primum mobile, that enfolds and moves the eight lower heavens.

t The crowned flame.] The Virgin, with the angel hovering over her.

[§] The seed.] Our Saviour.

[|] Regina Culi.] "The beginning of an anthem, sung by the church at Easter, in honour of our Lady," Volpi.

Testament.

Oh! what o'erflowing plenty is up-pil'd In those rich-laden coffers,* which below Sow'd the good seed, whose harvest now they keep. Here are the treasures tasted, that with tears Were in the Babylonian exile† won, When gold had fail'd them. Here, in synod high 130 Of ancient council with the new conven'd, Under the Son of Mary and of God, Victorious he‡ his mighty triumph holds, 'To whom the keys of glory were assign'd.

^{*} Those rich-laden coffers.] Those spirits, who, having sown the seed of good works on earth, now contain the fruit of their pious endeavours.

[†] In the Babylonian exile.] During their abode in this world. ‡ He.] St. Peter, with the other holy men of the Old and New

CANTO XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Saint Peter examines Dante touching Faith, and is contented with his answer.

" O YE! in chosen fellowship advanc'd To the great supper of the blessed Lamb, Whereon who feeds hath every wish fulfill'd; If to this man through God's grace be vouchsaf'd Foretaste of that, which from your table falls, Or ever death his fated term prescribe; Be ye not heedless of his urgent will: But may some influence of your sacred dews Sprinkle him. Of the fount ye always drink, Whence flows what most he craves." Beatrice spake; And the rejoicing spirits, like to spheres 11 On firm-set poles revolving, trail'd a blaze Of comet splendour: and as wheels, that wind Their circles in the horologe, so work The stated rounds, that to the' observant eye The first seems still, and, as it flew, the last: E'en thus their carols weaving variously, They, by the measure pac'd, or swift, or slow, Made me to rate the riches of their joy.

From that* which I did note in beauty most 20 Excelling, saw I issue forth a flame So bright, as none was left more goodly there. Round Beatrice thrice it wheel'd about, With so divine a song, that fancy's ear Records it not; and the pen passeth on, And leaves a blank; for that our mortal speech, Nor e'en the inward shaping of the brain, Hath colours fine enough to trace such folds†

"O saintly sister mine! thy prayer devout Is with so vehement affection urg'd, 30 Thou dost unbind me from that beauteous sphere."

Such were the accents tow'rds my lady breath'd From that blest ardour, soon as it was stay'd: To whom she thus: "O everlasting light Of him, within whose mighty grasp our Lord Did leave the keys, which of this wondrous bliss He bare below! tent; this man as thou wilt. With lighter probe or deep, touching the faith. By the which thou didst on the billows walk. If he in love, in hope, and in belief, 40 Be steadfast, is not hid from thee: for thou Hast there thy ken, where all things are beheld In liveliest portraiture. But since true faith Has peopled this fair realm with citizens; Meet is, that to exalt it's glory more, Thou, in his audience, shouldst thereof discourse."

^{*} From that.] Saint Peter.

[†] Such folds.] Pindar has the same bold image: υμνων πτυχαις. O. l. 170.

which both the Scholiast and Heyne, I think erroneously, under stand of the return of the strophes.

[†] Tent.] Tenta. The word "tent," try, is used by our old writers who, I think, usually spell it "taint;" as Massinger. Parliament of Love, act. iy, se. 3, "Do not fear, I have a staff to taint, and brayely."

Like to the bachelor, who arms himself. And speaks not, till the master have propos'd The question, to approve, and not to end it: So I, in silence, arm'd me, while she spake. 50 Summoning up each argument to aid: As was behoveful for such questioner, And such profession: "As good Christian ought, Declare thee, What is faith?" Whereat I rais'd My forehead to the light, whence this had breath'd: Then turn'd to Beatrice; and in her looks Approval met, that from their inmost fount I should unlock the waters. "May the grace. That giveth me the captain of the church For confessor," said I, "vouchsafe to me Aptutterance for my thoughts;" thenadded: "sire! E'en as set down by the unerring style Of thy dear brother, who with thee conspir'd To bring Rome in unto the way of life, Faith* of things hop'd is substance, and the proof Of things not seen; and herein doth consist Methinks it's essence." "Rightly hast thou deem'd," Was answer'd; "if thou well diseern, why first He hath defin'd it substance, and then proof."

"The deep things," I replied, "which here I sean Distinctly, are below from mortal eye 71 So hidden, they have in belief alone Their being; on which eredence, hope sublime Is built: and therefore substance, it intends.

And inasmuch as we must needs infer From such belief our reas'ning, all respect To other view excluded; hence of proef

^{*} Faith.] Hebrews, xi. 1. Vol. XLVI. D d

The' intention is deriv'd." Forthwith I heard:
"If thus, whate'er by learning mcn attain,
Were understood; the sophist would want room 80
To exercise his wit." So breath'd the flame
Of love; then added: "Current* is the coin
Thou utter'st, both in weight and in alloy.
But tell me, if thou hast it in thy purse."

"Even so glittering and so round," said I,

"I not a whit misdoubt of it's assay."

Next issued from the deep-imbosom'd splendour: "Say, whence the costly jewel, on the which Is founded every virtue, came to thee."

"The flood," I answer'd, "from the Spirit of God Rain'd down upon the ancient bond and new,†—91 Here is the reas'ning, that convinceth me So feelingly each argument beside Seems blunt, and forceless, in comparison." Then heard I; "Wherefore holdest thou that each, The elder proposition and the new, Which so persuaded thee, are the voice of heav'n?"

"The works, that follow'd evidence their truth;"
I answer'd: "Nature did not make for these

The iron hot, or on her anvil mold them."

"Who voucheth to thee of the works themselves,"
Was the reply, "that they in every deed

Are that they purport? None hath sworn so to thee."
"That all the world," said I, "should have been

turn'd
To Christian, and no miracle been wrought,
Would in itself be such a miracle.

Would in itself be such a miracle, The rest were not an hundredth part so great.

^{*} Current.] "The answer thou hast made, is right: but let me know if thy inward persuasion be conformable to thy profession."

† The ancient bond and new.] The Old and New Testament.

E'en thou wentst forth in poverty and hunger To set the goodly plant, that, from the vine It once was, now is grown unsightly bramble." 110

That ended, through the high celestial court Resounded all the spheres, "Praise we one God!" In song of most unearthly melody.

And when that Worthy* thus from branch to branch, Examining, had led me that we now Approach'd the topmost bough; he straight resum'd: "The grace, that holds sweet dalliance with thy soul, So far discreetly hath thy lips unclos'd; That, whatsoe'er has past them, I commend. Behoves thee to express, what thou believ'st 120 The next; and whereon, thy belief hath grown."

"O saintly sire and spirit!" I began, "Who seest that, which thou didst so believe, As to outstrip feet younger than thine own. Toward the sepulchre; thy will is here; That I the tenour of my creed unfold; And thou, the cause of it, hast likewise ask'd. And I reply: I in one God believe; One sole eternal Godhead, of whose love All heav'n is mov'd, himself unmov'd the while. Nor demonstration physical alone, Or more intelligential and abstruse, Persuades me to this faith: but from that truth It cometh to me rather, which is shed Through Moses; the rapt Prophets; and the Psalms; The Gospel; and what ye yourselves did write, When ye were gifted of the Holy Ghost. In three eternal Persons I believe:

^{*} That Worthy.] Quel Baron. In the next Canto, St. James is called "Barone," So in Boccaccio. G. vi. N. 10. we find "Baron Messer Santo Antonio."

Essence threefold and one; mysterious league
Of union absolute, which many a time,
The word of gospel lore upon my mind
Imprints; and from this germ, this firstling spark,
The lively flame dilates; and, like heav'n's star,
Doth glitter in me." As the master hears,
Well pleas'd, and then enfoldeth in his arms
The servant, who hath joyful tidings brought,
And having told the errand keeps his peace;
Thus benediction uttering with song,
Soon as my peace I held, compass'd me thrice
The apostolic radiance, whose behest
150
Had op'd my lips: sp well their answer pleas'd.

CANTO XXV.

ARCHMENT.

Saint James questions our Poet concerning Hope. Next Saint John appears; and, on perceiving that Dante looks intently on him, informs him that he, Saint John, had left his body resolved into earth, upon the earth; and that Christ and the Virgin alone had come with their bodies into heaven.

Ir e'er the sacred poem, that hath made Both heav'n and earth copartners in its toil, And with lean abstinence, through many a year, Faded my brow, be destin'd to prevail Over the cruelty, which bars me forth Of the fair sheep-fold,* where, a sleeping lamb, The wolves set on and fain had worried me: With other voice, and fleece of other grain, I shall forthwith return; and standing up At my baptismal font, shall claim the wreath 10 Due to the poet's temples: for I there First enter'd on the faith, which maketh souls Acceptable to God: and, for it's saket Peter had then circled my forehead thus.

Next from the squadron, whence had issued forth

^{*} The fair sheep-fold.] Florence, whence he was banished .. † For it's sake.] For the sake of that faith.

The first fruit of Christ's vicars on the earth, Toward us mov'd a light, at view whereof My Lady, full of gladness, spake to me: "Lo! lo! behold the peer of mickle might, That makes Galicia throng'd with visitants."*

That makes Galicia throng'd with visitants."*

As when the ring-dove by his mate alights;
In circles, each about the other wheels,
And, murmuring, cooes his fondness: thus saw I
One, of the other† great and glorious prince,
With kindly greeting, hail'd; extolling, both,
Their heavenly banqueting: but when an end
Was to their gratulation, silent, each,
Before me sat they down, so burning bright,
I could not look upon them. Smiling then,
Beatrice spake: "O life in glory shrin'd
Who‡ didst the largess§ of our kingly court
Set down with faithful pen; let now thy voice,

^{*} Galicia throng'd with visitants.] See Mariana. Hist. lib. xi. cap. xiii. "En el tiempo," &c. "At the time that the sepulchre of the apostle, St. James was discovered, the devotion for that place extended itself not only over all Spain, but even round about to foreign nations. Multitudes from all parts of the world came to visit it. Many others were deterred by the difficulty of the journey, by the roughness and barrenness of those parts, and by the incursions of the Moors, who made captives many of the pilgrims.—The canons of St. Eloy, afterwards, 'the precise time is not known) with a desire of remedying these evils, built, in many places along the whole road which reached as far as to Frances hospitals for the reception of the pilgrims."

⁺ One, of the other.] Saint Peter and Saint James.

[†] Who. The epistle of St. James is here attributed to the elder apostle of that name, whose shrine was at Compostella, in Galicia. Which of the two was the author of it, is yet doubtful.

[§] Largess.] He appears to allude to the Epistle of James, chap. i. v. 5. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and uphraideth not; and it shall be given him." Or, to v. 17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."

Of hope the praises, in this height resound. For well thou know'st, who figur'st it as oft,* As Jesus, to ye three, more brightly shone."

"Lift up thy head; and be thou strong in trust: For that, which hither from the mortal world Arriveth, must be ripen'd in our beam."

Such cheering accents from the second flame†
Assur'd me; and mine eyes I lifted up‡
40
Unto the mountains, that had bow'd them late
With over-heavy burden. "Sith our Liege
Wills of grace, that thou, or e'er thy death,
In the most secret council with his lords
Shouldst be confronted, so that having view'd
The glories of our court, thou mayst therewith
Thyself, and all who hear, invigorate
With hope, that leads to blissful end; declare,
What is that hope? how it doth flourish in thee?
And whence thou hadst it?" Thus, proceeding still,
The second light: and she, whose gentle love
My soaring pennons in that lofty flight

Some editions, however, read "l'allegrezza," "joy," instead of "la larghezza,"

^{*} As oft.] Landino and Venturi, who read "Quanto," explain this, that the frequency with which James had commended the virtue of hope, was in proportion to the brightness in which Jesus had appeared at his transfiguration. Vellutello, who reads "Quante," supposes that James three times recommends patient hope in the last chapter of his Epistle; and that Jesus, as many times, showed his brightness to the three disciples; once when he cleansed the lepers (Luke v.;) again when he raised the daughter of Jairus (Mark v.;) and a third time when he was transfigured. As to Lombardi, who also reads "Quante," his construction of the passage seems to me scarcely intelligible.

⁺ The second flame:] St. James.

[†] I lifted up.] "I looked up to the Apostles." "I will lift up mine eyes unto the bills, from whence cometh my help." Psalm exxi. !.

Escorted, thus preventing me, rejoin'd:

"Among her sons, not one more full of hope,
Hath the church militant: so 't is of him
Recorded in the sun, whose liberal orb
Enlighteneth all our tribe: and ere his term
Of warfare, hence permitted he is come,
From Egypt to Jerusalem,* to see.
The other points, both which† thou hast inquir'd, 60
Not for more knowledge, but that he may tell
How dear thou holdst the virtue; these to him
Leave I: for he may answer thee with ease,
And without boasting, so God give him grace."

Like to the scholar, practis'd in his task,
Who, willing to give proof of diligence,
Seconds his teacher gladly; "Hope,"; said I,
"Is of the joy to come a sure expectance,
The effect of grace divine and merit preceding.
This light, from many a star, visits my heart; 70
But flow'd to me, the first, from him who sang
The songs of the Supreme; himself supreme
Among his tuneful brethren. 'Let all hope
In thee,' so spake his anthem, \$ 'who have known
Thy name; and, with my faith, who know not that?

[•] From Egupt to Jerusalem.] From the lower world to heaven. + Both which.] One point Beatrice has herself answered; "how that hope flourishes in him." The other two remain for Dante to resolve.

[†] Hope.] This is from the Sentences of Petrus Lombardus. "Est autem spes virtus, qua spiritualia et æterna bona sperantur id est cum fiducia expectantur. Est enim spes certa expectatio futuræ beatitudinis, veniens ex dei gratia et ex meritis præcedentibus vel ipsam spem, quam natura præit charitas ut rem speratam, id est beatitudinem æternam. Sine meritis enim aliquid sperare non spes, sed præsumptio dici potest." Pet. Lomb. Sent. lib. iii. dist. 26. Ed. Bas. 1486. fol.

[§] His anthem.] "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee," Psalm ix. 16.

From thee, the next, distilling from his spring,
In thine epistle, fell on me the drops
So plenteously, that I on others shower
The influence of their dew." Whileas I spake,
A lamping, as of quick and volley'd lightning, 80
Within the bosom of that mighty sheen*
Play'd tremulous; then forth these accents breath'd:
"Love for the virtue, which attended me
E'en to the palm, and issuing from the field,
Glows vigorous yet within me; and inspires
To ask of thee, whom also it delights,
What promise thou from hope, in chief, dost win."

"Both scriptures, new and ancient," I reply'd,
"Propose the mark (which even now I view)
For souls belov'd of God. Isaias† saith, 90
'That, in their own land, each one must be elad
In twofold vesture;' and their proper land
Is this delicious life. In terms more full,
And elearer far, thy brother‡ hath set forth
This revelation to us, where he tells
Of the white raiment destin'd to the saints."
And, as the words were ending, from above,
"Thy hope in thee!" first heard we eried: whereto
Answer'd the earols all. Amidst them next,
A light of so elear amplitude emerg'd, 100
That winter's month were but a single day,

^{*} That mighty sheen.] The spirit of Saint James.

[†] Isaias.] 'He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of rightcoursess." Chap. lxi. 10.

[‡] Thy brother] St. John in the Revelation, vii. 9.

[§] Winter's month.] "If a luminary, like that which now appeared, were to shine throughout the month following the winter solstice, during which the constellation Cancer appears in the east at the setting of the sun, there would be no interruption to the light, but the whole month would be as a single day."

Were such a crystal in the Cancer's sign. Like as a virgin riseth up, and goes, And enters on the mazes of the dance; Though gay, yet innocent of worse intenta Than to do fitting honour to the bride: So I beheld the new effulgence come Unto the other two, who in a ring Wheel'd, as became their rapture. In the dance, And in the song, it mingled. And the dame Held on them fix'd her looks; e'en as the spouse, Silent, and moveless. "This* is he, who lay Upon the bosom of our pelican: This he, into whose keeping, from the cross, The mighty charge was given." Thus she spake: Yet therefore nought the more remov'd her sight From marking them; or ere her words began, Or when they clos'd. As he, who looks intent, And strives with searching ken, how he may see The sun in his eclipse, and, through desire Of seeing, loseth power of sight; so It Peer'd on that last resplendence, while I heard: "Why dazzlest thou thine eyes in seeking that, Which here abides not? Earth my body is, In earth; and shall be, with the rest, so long, As till our number equal the decree Of the Most High. The two+ that have ascended, In this our blessed cloister, shine alone With the two garments. So report below."

^{*} This.] St. John, who reclined on the bosom of our Saviour, and to whose charge Jesus recommended his mother.

⁺ So I.] He looked so earnestly, to descry whether St. John were present there in body, or in spirit only; having had his doubts raised by that saying of our Saviour's: "If I will, that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

[†] The two.] Christ and Mary, whom he has described, in the last Canto but one, as rising above his sight.

As when, for ease of labour, or to shun
Suspected peril, at a whistle's breath,
The oars, erewhile dash'd frequent in the wave,
All rest: the flamy circle at that voice
So rested; and the mingling sound was still,
Which from the trinal band, soft-breathing, rose.
I turn'd, but ah! how trembled in my thought,
When, looking at my side again to see
Beatrice, I descried her not; although,
Not distant, on the happy coast she stood.



CANTO XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Saint John examines our Poet touching Charity. Afterwards Adam tells when he was created, and placed in the terrestrial Paradise; how long he remained in that state; what was the occasion of his fall; when he was admitted into heaven; and what language he spake.

WITH dazzled eyes, whilst wond'ring I remain'd; Forth of the beamy flame,* which dazzled me, Issued a breath, that in attention mute Detain'd me; and these words it spake: "Twere That, long as till thy vision, on my form [well, O'erspent, regain it's virtue, with discourse Thou compensate the brief delay. Say then, Beginning, to what point thy soul aspires: And meanwhile rest assur'd, that sight in thee Is but o'erpower'd a space, not wholly quench'd; 10 Since thy fair guide and lovely, in her look Hath potency, the like to that, which dwelt In Ananias' hand."† I answering thus:
"Be to mine eyes the remedy, or late

^{*} The beamy flame.] St. John.

[†] Ananias' hand.] Who, by putting his hand on St. Paul, reetored his sight. Acts, ix. 17:

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Or early, at her pleasure; for they were The gates, at which she enter'd, and did light Her never-dying fire. My wishes here Are centred: in this palace is the weal. That Alpha and Omega is, to all The lessons love can read me." Yet again The voice, which had dispers'd my fear when daz'd With that excess, to converse urg'd, and spake: 65 Behoves thee sift more narrowly thy terms; And say, who level'd at this scope thy bow." "Philosophy," said I, "hath arguments, And this place hath authority enough, To' imprint in me such love: for, of constraint, Good, inasmuch as we perceive the good, Kindles our love; and in degree the more, As it comprises more of goodness in 't. SO The essence then, where such advantage is, That each good, found without it, is nought else But of his light the beam, must needs attract The soul of each one, loving, who the truth Discerns, on which this proof is built. Such truth Learn I from him,* who shows me the first love Of all intelligential substances Eternal: from his voice I learn, whose word Is truth: that of himself to Moses saith. 'I will maket all my good before thee pass:'

† I will make.] Exodus xxxiii, 19.

Lastly, from thee I learn, who chief proclaim'st,

[•] From him.] Some suppose that Plato is here meant, who, in his Banquet, makes Phædrus say: "Love is confessedly amongst the e.dest of beings; and being the eldest, is the cause to us of the greatest goods." Plat. Op. tom. x. p. 177. Bip. Ed. Others have understood it of Aristotle; and others, of the writer who goes by the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, referred to in the twenty-eighth canto.

E'en at the outset* of thy heralding, In mortal ears the mystery of heav'n."

"Through human wisdom, and the' authority Therewith agreeing," heard I answer'd, "keep The choicest of thy love for God. But say, If thou yet other cords within thee feel'st. That draw the tow'rds him; so that thou report How many are the fangs, with which this love Is grappled to thy soul," I did not miss, 50 To what intent the eagle of our Lordt Had pointed his demand; yea, noted well The' avowal which he led to: and resum'd: "All grappling bonds, that knit the heart to God, Confederate to make fast our charity. The being of the world; and mine own being; The death which He endur'd, that I should live: And that, which all the faithful hope, as I do: To the forementioned lively knowledge join'd: Have from the sea of ill love sav'd my bark, 60 And on the coast secur'd it of the right. As for the leaves, that in the garden bloom, My love for them is great, as is the good Dealt by the' eternal hand, that tends them all."

I ended: and therewith a song most sweet
Rang through the spheres; and "Holy, holy, holy,"
Accordant with the rest, my lady sang.
And as a sleep is broken and dispers'd
Through sharp encounter of the nimble light,
With the eye's spirit running forth to meet
70
The ray, from membrane on to membrane urg'd:
And the upstartled wight loathes that he sees;

[·] At the outset.] John i. 1, &c.

⁺ The eagle of our Lord.] St. John.

t The leaves. | Created beings.

So, at his sudden waking, he misdeems
Of all around him, till assurance waits
On better judgment: thus the saintly dame
Drove from before mine eyes the motes away,
With the resplendence of her own, that cast
Their brightness downward, thousand miles below.
Whence I my vision, clearer than before,
Recover'd; and well nigh astounded, ask'd
Of a fourth light, that now with us I saw.

And Beatrice: "The first living soul,*
That ever the first virtue fram'd, admires
Within these rays his Maker." Like the leaf,
That bows it's lithe top till the blast is blown;
By it's own virtue rear'd, then stands aloof:
So I, the whilst she said, awe-stricken bow'd.
Then eagerness to speak embolden'd me;
And I began: "O fruit! that wast alone
Mature, when first engender'd; ancient father!
That doubly seest in every wedded bride
Thy daughter, by affinity and blood;
Devoutly as I may, I pray thee hold
Converse with me: my will thou seest: and I,
More speedily to hear thee, tell it not."

It chanceth oft some animal bewrays,
Through the sleek cov'ring of his furry coat,
The fondness, that stirs in him, and conforms
His outside seeming to the eheer within:
And in like guise was Adam's spirit mov'd
To joyous mood, that through the cov'ring shone,
Transparent, when to pleasure me it spake:
"No need thy will be told, which I untold
Better discern, than thou whatever thing,

^{*} The first living soul.] Adam.

Thou holdst most certain: for that will I see In Him, who is truth's mirror; and Himself. Parhelion* unto all things, and nought else, To Him. This wouldst thou hear: how long since, God Plac'd me in that high garden, from whose bounds She led me up this ladder, steep and long; What space endur'd my season of delight; Whence truly sprang the wrath that banish'd me; And what the language, which I spake and fram'd. Not that I tasted of the tree, my son, Was in itself the cause of that exile. But only my transgressing of the mark Assign'd me. There, whencet at thy lady's hest The Mantuan mov'd him, still was I debarr'd This council, till the sun had made complete. Four thousand and three hundred rounds and twice. His annual journey; and, through every light In his broad pathway, saw I him return, Thousand save sev'nty times, the whilst I dwelt Upon the earth. The language | I did use Was worn away, or ever Nimrod's race Their unaccomplishable work began. For nought, that man inclines to, e'er was lasting: Left by his reason free, and variable As is the sky that sways him. That he speaks,

Parhelion.] Who enlightens and comprehends all things; but is himself enlightened and comprehended by none.

[†] Whence.] That is, from Limbo. See Hell, canto ii. 53. Adam says that 5232 years elapsed from his creation to the time of his deliverance, which followed the death of Christ.

[†] The language.] Hac forma locutionis locutus est Adam, hac forma locuti sunt omnes posteri ejus usque ad edificationem turris Babel. De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. vi. "This form of speech Adam used; this, all his posterity until the building of the tower of Babel."

Is natue's prompting: whether thus, or thus,
She leaves to you, as ye do most affect it.
Ere I descended into hell's abyss,
El was the name on earth of the Chief Good,
Whose joy enfolds me: Eli then 't was call'd.
And so beseemeth: for, in mortals, use*
Is as the leaf upon the bough; that goes,
And other comes instead. Upon the mount
Most high above the waters, all my life,†
Both innocent and guilty, did but reach
From the first hour, to that which cometh next, 140
(As the sun changes quarter) to the sixth."

• Use.] From Horace, Ars Poet. 62.

[†] All my life.] "I remained in the terrestrial Paradise only to the seventh hour." In the Historia Scolastica of Petrus Comestor, it is said of our first parents: "Quidam tradunt eos fuisse in Paradiso septem horas." f. 9. ed. Par. 1513, 4to.

CANTO XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

Saint Peter hitterly rehukes the covetousness of his successors in the apostolic see, while all the heavenly host sympathize in his indignation: they then vanish upwards. Beatrice bids Dante again cast his view below. Afterwards they are borne into the ninth heaven, of which she shows him the nature and properties; blaming the perverseness of man, who places his will on low and perishable things.

THEN "Glory to the Father, to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit," rang aloud
Throughout all Paradise; that with the song
My spirit reel'd, so passing sweet the strain.
And what I saw was equal ecstasy:
One universal smile it seem'd of all things;
Joy past compare; gladness unutterable;
Imperishable life of peace and love;
Exhaustless riches, and unmeasur'd bliss.

Before mine eyes stood the four torches* lit: 10 And that,† which first had come, began to wax In brightness; and, in semblance, such became,

^{*} Four torches.] St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and Adam.
† That.] St. Peter, who looked as the planet Jupiter would, if
it assumed the sanguine appearance of Mars.

As Jove might be, if he and Mars were birds, And interchang'd their plumes. Silence ensued. Through the blest quire; by Him, who here appoints Vicissitude of ministry, enjoin'd: When thus I heard: "Wonder not, if my hue Be chang'd; for, while I speak, these shalt thou see All in like manner change with me. My place He* who usurps on earth, (my place, ay, mine, Which in the presence of the Son of God Is void) the same hath made my cemetery A common sewer of puddle and of blood: The more below his triumph, who from hence Malignant fell." Such colour, + as the sun. At eve or morning, paints an adverse cloud, Then saw I sprinkled over all the sky. And as the' unblemish'd dame, who, in herself Secure of censure, yet at bare report Of other's failing, shrinks with maiden fear: 50 So Beatrice, in her semblance, chang'd: And such eclipse in heav'n, methinks, was seen. When the Most Holy suffer'd. Then the words Proceeded, with voice, alter'd from itself So clean, the semblance did not alter more. "Not to this end was Christ's spouse with my blood, With that of Linus, and of Cletus, # fed: That she might serve for purchase of base gold: But for the purchase of this happy life. Did Sextus, Pius, and Callixtus bleed, 40

Qui color infectis adversi solis ab ictu Nubibus esse solet; aut purpureæ Auroræ. Ovid, Met. lib. iii. 184.

^{*} He.] Boniface VIII.

[†] Such colour.]

t Of Linus, and of Cletus.] Bishops of Rome in the first century:

And Urban;* they, whose doom was not without Much weeping seal'd. No purpose was of our's, t That on the right hand of our successors. Part of the Christian people should be set, And part upon their left; nor that the keys, Which were vouchsaf'd me, should for ensigns serve Unto the banners, that do levy war On the baptiz'd; nor I, for sigil-mark, Set upon sold and lying privileges: Which makes me oft to bicker and turn red. In shepherd's clothing, greedy wolves‡ below Range wide o'er all the pastures. Arm of God! Why longer sleepst thou? Cahorsines and Gascons Prepare to quaff our blood. O good beginning! To what a vile conclusion must thou stoop. But the high providence, which did defend, Through Scipio, the world's empery for Rome. Will not delay it's succour: and thou, son,

• Did Sextus, Pius, and Callixtus bleed,

And Urban.] The former two, bishops of the same see, in the

second; and the others, in the fourth century.

+ No purpose was of ours.] "We did not intend that our successors should take any part in the political divisions among Christians; or that my figure (the seal of St. Peter) should serve as a mark to authorise iniquitous grants and privileges."

‡ Wolves.]

Wolves shall succeed to teachers, grievous wolves.

Milton, P. L. b. xii. 508.

§ Cahorsines and Gascons.] He alludes to Jacques d'Ossa, a native of Cahors, who filled the papal chair in 1316, after it had been two years vacant, and assumed the name of John XXII. and to Clement V. a Gascon, of whom see Hell, canto xix. 86, and note.

|| Thou, son.] Beatus Petrus—multaque locutus est, et docuit me de veteri testamento, de hominibus etiam adhuc in seculo adhuc viventibus plura peccata intonuit mihi, precepitque, ut ea quæ de illis audieram eis referrem. Alberici Visio, § 45.

Who through thy mortal weight shalt yet again Return below, open thy lips, nor hide What is by me not hidden." As a flood 60 Of frozen vapours streams adown the air, What time the she-goat* with her skiey horn Touches the sun: so saw I there stream wide The vapours, who with us had linger'd late, And with glad triumph deck the' ethereal cope. Onward my sight their semblances pursued; So far pursued, as till the space between From it's reach sever'd them: whereat the guide Celestial, marking me no more intent 70 On upward gazing, said, "Look down and see What circuit thou hast compass'd." From the hourt When I before had cast my view beneath, All the first region overpast I saw, Which from the midmost to the bound'ry winds; That onward, thence, from Gades, # I beheld The unwise passage of Laertes' son; And hitherward the shore, where thou, Europa, Mad'st thee a joyful burden; and yet more Of this dim spot had seen, but that the sun, 80 A constellation off and more, had ta'en His progress in the zodiac underneath.

Then by the spirit, that doth never leave It's amorous dalliance with my lady's looks,

The she-goat. When the sun is in Capricorn.

§ The shore.] Phænicia, where Europa, the daughter of Agenor, mounted on the back of Jupiter, in his shape of a bull.

[†] From the hour.] Since he had last looked (see Canto xxii.) he perceived that he had passed from the meridian circle to the eastern horizon; the half of our hemisphere, and a quarter of the heaven.

[‡] From Gades,] See Hell, canto xxvi. 106.

[#] The sun. Dante was in the constellation Gemini, and the sun in Aries. There was, therefore, part of those two constellations, and the whole of Taurus, between them.

Back with redoubled ardour were my eyes
Led unto her: and from her radiant smiles,
Whenas I turn'd me, pleasure so divinc
Did lighten on me, that whatever bait
Or art or nature in the human flesh,
Or in its limn'd resemblance, can combine
90
Through greedy eyes to take the soul withal,
Werc, to her beauty, nothing. It's boon influence
From the fair nest of Leda* rapt me forth,
And wafted on into the swiftest heav'n.

What place for entrance Beatrice chose, I may not say; so uniform was all, Liveliest and loftiest. She my secret wish Divin'd; and, with such gladness, that God's love Seem'd from her visage shining, thus began: Here is the goal, whence motion on his race 100 Starts: motionless the centre, and the rest All mov'd around. Except the soul divinc. Place in this heav'n is none; the soul divine, Wherein the love, which ruleth o'er it's orb, Is kindled, and the virtue, that it sheds: One circle, light and love, enclasping it, As this doth clasp the others; and to Him, Who draws the bound, it's limit only known. Measur'd itself by none, it doth divide Motion to all, counted unto them forth, 110 As by the fifth or half ye count forth ten. The vase, wherein time's roots† are plung'd, thou

^{*} The fair nest of Leda.] "From the Gemini;" thus called, because Leda was the mother of the twins, Castor and Pollux.

[†] Time's roots.] "Here," says Beatrice, "are the roots, from whence time springs: for the parts into which it is divided, the other heavens must be considered." And she then breaks out into an exclanation on the degeneracy of human nature, which does not lift itself to the contemplation of divine things.

Look elsewhere for the leaves. O mortal lust! That canst not lift thy head above the waves Which whelm and sink thee down. The will in man Bears goodly blossoms; but it's ruddy promise Is, by the dripping of perpetual rain. Made mere abortion: faith and innocence Are met with but in babes; each taking leave, Ere cheeks with down are sprinkled: he that fasts While yet a stammerer, with his tongue let loose Gluts every food alike in every moon: One, yet a babbler, loves and listens to His mother: but no sooner hath free use Of speech, than he doth wish her in her grave. So suddenly doth the fair child of him,* Whose welcome is the morn and eve his parting, To negro blackness change her virgin white.

"Thou, to abate thy wonder, note, that none†
Bears rule in earth; and it's frail family 130
Are therefore wand'rers. Yet before the date.\$

Ben sa ch' il prova, e fiati cosa piana Anzi mill' anni, Trionfo d'Amore, cap, i.

^{*} The fair child of him.] There is something very similar in our Author's Treatise de Monarchia, lib. i. p. 104. "Humanum genus filius est cœli quod est perfectissimum in omni opere suo. Generat enim homo hominem et sol juxta secundum in Naturali Auditu." This, therefore, is intended for a philosophical truth, and not for a figure, as when Pindar calls "the day" "child of the sun:" Ol. ii. 59.

[†] None.] Because, as has been before said, the shepherds are become wolves.

[‡] Before the date.] "Before many ages are past; before those fractions, which are dropt in the reckoning of every year, shall amount to so large a portion of time, that January shall be no more a winter month." By this periphrasis is meant "in a short time;" as we say familiarly, such a thing will happen before a thousand years are over, when we mean, it will happen soon. Thus Petrarch:—

When, through the hundredth in his reck'ning dropt,

Pale January must be shov'd aside
From winter's calendar, these heav'nly spheres
Shall roar so loud, that fortune shall be fain*
To turn the poop, where she hath now the prow;
So that the fleet run onward r and true fruit,
Expected long, shall crown at last the bloom."

* Fortune shall be fain.] The commentators, in general, suppose, that our Poet bere augurs that great reform, which he vainly hoped would follow on the arrival of the Emperor Henry VII. in Italy. Lombardi refers the prognostication to Can Grande della Scala: and when we consider that this Canto was not finished till after the death of Henry, as appears from the mention that is made of John XXII. it cannot be denied but the conjecture is prohable.

Vol. XLVI.



CANTO XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Still in the ninth heaven, our Poet is permitted to behold the divine essence: and then sees, in three hierarchies, the nine choirs of angels. Beatrice clears some difficulties which occur to him on this occasion.

So she, who doth imparadise my soul. Had drawn the veil from off our present life. And bar'd the truth of poor mortality: When lo! as one who, in a mirror, spies The shining of a flambeau at his back. Lit sudden ere he deem of its approach. And turneth to resolve him, if the glass Have told him true, and sees the record faithful As note is to it's metre: even thus. I well remember, did befall to me, 10 Looking upon the beauteous eyes, whence love Had made the leash to take me. As I turn'd; And that, which none, who in that volume* looks, Can miss of, in itself apparent, struck My view; a point I saw, that darted light So sharp, no lid, unclosing, may bear up

^{*} That volume.] The ninth heaven; as Vellutello, I think, rightly interprets it.

Against it's keenness. The least star we ken From hence, had seem'd a moon; set by it's side, As star by side of star. And so far off, Perchance, as is the halo from the light 20 Which paints it, when most dense the vapour spreads; There wheel'd about the point a circle' of fire, More rapid than the motion which surrounds, Speediest, the world. Another this enring'd; And that a third; the third a fourth, and that A fifth encompass'd; which a sixth next bound; And over this, a seventh, following, reach'd Circumference so ample, that its bow, Within the span of Juno's messenger, Had scarce been held entire. Beyond the seventh, Ensued yet other two. And every one. As more in number distant from the first, Was tardier in motion: and that glow'd With flame most pure, that to the sparkle of truth Was nearest; as partaking most, methinks, Of it's reality. The guide belov'd Saw me in anxious thought suspense, and spake: "Heav'n, and all nature hangs upon that point.* The circle thereto most conjoin'd observe; And know, that by intenser love it's course Is, to this swiftness, wing'd." To whom I thus: "It were enough; nor should I further seek, Had I but witness'd order, in the world Appointed, such as in these wheels is seen. But in the sensible world such diff'rence is,†

 Heav'n, and all nature, hangs upon that point.] "From that beginning depend heaven and nature."

[†] Such diff'rence.] The material world and the intelligential (the copy and the pattern) appear to Dante to differ in this respect, that the orbits of the latter are more swift, the nearest

That in each round shows more divinity,
As each is wider from the centre. Hence,
If in this wondrous and angelic temple,
That hath, for confine, only light and love,
My wish may have completion, I must know,
Wherefore such disagreement is between
The exemplar and it's copy: for myself,
Contemplating, I fail to pierce the cause."

"It is no marvel, if thy fingers foil'd
Do leave the knot untied: so hard 't is grown
For want of tenting." Thus she said: "But take,"
She added, "If thou wish thy eure, my words,
And entertain them subtly. Every orb,
Corporeal, doth proportion its extent
Unto the virtue through it's parts diffus'd.

The greater blessedness preserves the more.
The greater is the body (if all parts
Share equally) the more is to preserve.
Therefore the circle, whose swift course enwheels
The universal frame, answers to that
Which is supreme in knowledge and in love.

they are to the centre, whereas the contrary is the case with the orbits of the former. The seeming contradiction is thus accounted for by Beatrice. In the material world, the more ample the body is, the greater is the good, of which it is capable; supposing all the parts to be equally perfect. But in the intelligential world, the circles are more excellent and powerful, the more they approximate to the central point, which is God. Thus the first circle, that of the seraphim, corresponds to the ninth sphere, or primum mobile; the second, that of the cherubim, to the eighth sphere, or heaven of fixed stars; the third, or circle of thrones, to the seventh sphere, or planet of Saturn; and in like manner throughout the two other trines of circles and spheres.

Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb.

Milton, P. L. b. v. 596.

Thus by the virtue, not the seeming breadth
Of substance, measuring, thou shalt see the heav'ns,
Each to the' intelligence that ruleth it,
Greater to more, and smaller unto less,
Suited in strict and wondrous harmony."

As when the north* blows from his milder cheek A blast, that scours the sky, forthwith our air, Clear'd of the rack that hung on it before, Glitters; and, with his beauties all unveil'd, The firmament looks forth serene, and smiles: Such was my cheer, when Beatrice drove With clear reply the shadows back, and truth Was manifested, as a star in heaven. And when the words were ended, not unlike 80 To iron in the furnace, every cirque, Ebullient, shot forth scintillating fires: And every sparkle shivering to new blaze, In numbert did outmillion the account Reduplicate upon the chequer'd board. Then heard I echoing on, from choir to choir, "Hosanna," to the fixed point, that holds, And shall for ever hold them to their place, From everlasting, irremovable.

Musing awhile I stood: and she, who saw 90 My inward meditations, thus began:
"In the first circles, they, whom thou beheldst, Are seraphim and cherubim. Thus swift

^{*} The north.] By "ond' e piu leno," some understand that point from whence "the wind is nildest;" others, that "in which there is most force." The former interpretation is probably right.

[†] In number.] The sparkles exceeded the number which would be produced by the sixty-four squares of a chess-board, if for the first we reckoned one; for the next, two; for the third, four; and so went on doubling to the end of the account.

Follow their hoops, in likeness to the point, Near as they can, approaching; and they can The more, the loftier their vision. Those, That round them fleet, gazing the Godhead next, Are thrones: in whom the first trine ends. And all Are blessed, even as their sight descends Deeper into the truth, wherein rest is 100 For every mind. Thus happiness hath root In seeing, not in loving, which of sight Is aftergrowth. And of the seeing such The need, as unto each, in due degree, Grace and good-will their measure have assign'd. The other trine, that with still opening buds In this eternal springtide blossom fair, Fearless of bruising from the nightly ram,* Breathe up in warbled melodies threefold Hosannas, blending ever; from the three, 110 Transmitted, hierarchy of gods, for ave Rejoicing; dominations+ first; next them, Virtues: and powers the third; the next to whom Are princedoms and archangels, with glad round To tread their festal ring; and last, the band Angelical, disporting in their sphere. All, as they circle in their orders, look Aloft; and, downward, with such sway prevail, That all with mutual impulse tend to God. These once a mortal view beheld. Desire,

[•] Fearless of bruising from the nightly ram.] Not injured, like the productions of our spring, by the influence of autumn, when the constellation Aries rises at sunset.

⁺ Dominations.]

Hear all ye angels, progeny of light, Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers. Milton, P. L. b. v. 601.

In Dionysius,* so intensely wrought,
That he, as I have done, rang'd them; and nam'd
Their orders, marshall'd in his thought. From him,
Dissentient, one refus'd his sacred read.
But soon as in this heav'n his doubting eyes
Were open'd, Gregory* at his error smil'd.
Nor marvel, that a denizen of earth
Should scan such secret truth; for he had learnt?
Both this and much beside of these our orbs,
From an eye witness to heav'n's mysteries." 130

* Dionysius.] The Areopagite, in his book De Cœlesti Hierarchia.

† Gregory.] Gregory the Great. "Novem vero angelorum ordines diximus; quia videlicet esse, testante sacro eloquio, scimus: Angelos, archangelos, virtutes, potestates, principatus, dominationes, thronos, cheruhin atque seraphin." Divi Gregorii

Hom. xxxiv. f. 125, ed. Par. 1518. fol.

† He had learnt, Dionysius, he says, had learnt from St. Paul. It is almost unnecessary to add, that the book, above referred to, which goes under his name, was the production of a later age. In Bishop Bull's seventh sermon, which treats of the different degrees of beatitude in heaven, there is much that resembles what is said on the same subject hy our Poet. The learned prelate, however, appears a little inconsistent, when, after having blamed Dionysius the Areopagite, "for reckoning up exactly, the several orders of the angelical hierarchy, as if he had seen a muster of the heavenly host before his eyes," (v. 1. p. 313.) he himself then speaks rather more particularly of the several orders in the celestial hierarchy, than he is warranted in doing by holy Scripture.

CANTO XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

Beatrice beholds, in the mirror of divine truth, some doubts which had entered the mind of Dante. These she resolves; and then digresses into a vehement reprehension of certain theologians and preachers in those days, whose ignorance or avarice induced them to substitute their own inventions for the pure word of the Gospel.

No longer,* than what time Latona's twins
Cover'd of Libra and the fleecy star,
Together both, girding the' horizon hang;
In even balance, from the zenith pois'd;
Till from that verge, each, changing hemisphere,
Part the nice level; e'en so brief a space
Did Beatrice's silence hold. A smile
Sat painted on her cheek; and her fix'd gaze
Bent on the point at which my vision fail'd:
When thus, her words resuming, she began:
10
"I speak, nor what thou wouldst inquire, demand;
For I have mark'd it where all time and place

^{*} No longer.] As short a space, as the sun and moon are in changing hemispheres, when they are opposite to one another, the one under the sign of Aries, and the other under that of Libra, and both hang, for a moment, poised as it were in the hand of the zenith.

Are present. Not for increase to himself Of good, which may not be increas'd, but forth To manifest his glory by it's beams: Inhabiting his own eternity, Beyond time's limit or what bound soe'er To circumscribe his being; as he will'd. Into new natures, like unto himself, Eternal Love unfolded: nor before. 20 As if in dull inaction, torpid, lav. For, not in process of before or aft,* Upon these waters mov'd the Spirit of God. Simple and mix'd, both form and substance,† forth To perfect being started, like three darts Shot from a bow three-corded. And as ray In crystal, glass, and amber, shines entire, E'en at the moment of it's issuing; thus Did, from the' eternal Sov'reign, beam entire His threefold operation, # at one act 30 Produc'd coeval. Yet, in order, each Created his due station knew: those highest. Who pure intelligence were made; mere power, The lowest; in the midst, bound with strict league, Intelligence and power, unsever'd bond. Long tract of ages by the angels past,

For, not in process of before or aft.] There was neither "before nor after," no distinction, that is, of time, till the creation of the world.

[†] Simple and mix'd, both form and substance.] Simple and unmixed form answers to "pure intelligence," v. 33, (pure atto) the highest of created being; simple and unmixed substance, to "mere power," v. 33, (pura potenzia) the lowest; and form mixed with substance, to intelligence and power, v. 35, (potenzia con atto) that which holds the middle place between the other two.

[†] His threefold operation.] He means that spiritual heings, brute matter, and the intermediate part of the creation, which participates both of spirit and matter, were produced at once.

Ere the creating of another world,

Describ'd on Jerom's pages,* thou hast seen.

But that what I disclose to thee is true,

Those penmen,† whom the Holy Spirit mov'd, 40
In many a passage of their sacred book,

Attest; as thou by diligent search shalt find:

And reason, in some sort, discerns the same,

Who scarce would grant the heav'nly ministers,

Of their perfection void, so long a space.

Thus when and where these spirits of love were made,

Thou know'st, and how: and, knowing, hast allay'd Thy thirst, which from the triple questions rose. Ere one had reckon'd twenty, e'en so soon, Part of the angels fell: and, in their fall, 50 Confusion to your elements ensued. The others kept their station: and this task, Whereon thou lookst, began, with such delight, That they surcease not ever, day nor night, Their circling. Of that fatal lapse the cause Was the curst pride of him whom thou hast seen Pent with the world's incumbrance. Those, whom

here

Thou seest, were lowly to confess themselves Of his free bounty, who had made them apt

^{*} On Jerome's pages.] St. Jerome had described the angels as created long before the rest of the universe: an opinion which Thomas Aquinas controverted; and the latter, as Dante thinks, had scripture on his side.

[†] Those penmen.] As in Genesis, i. 1, and Ecclesiasticus, xviii.14 † Reason.] The heavenly ministers (motori) would have existed to no purpose if they had been created before the corporeal world, which they were to govern.

[§] The triple question.] He had wished to know where, when, and how the angels had been created, and these three questions had been resolved.

^{||} Pent.] See Hell, canto xxxiv. 105.

For ministries so high: therefore their views 60 Were, by enlight'ning grace and their own merit, Exalted: so that in their will confirm'd They stand, nor fear to fall. For do not doubt, But to receive the grace which heav'n vouchsafes, Is meritorious,* even as the soul With prompt affection welcometh the guest, Now, without further help, if with good heed My words thy mind have treasur'd, thou henceforth This consistory round about mayst scan. And gaze thy fill. But since thou hast on earth Heard vain disputers, reasoners in the schools, Canvass the' angelic nature, and dispute It's powers of apprehension, memory, choice: Therefore, 't is well thou take from me the truth, Pure and without disguise; which they below, Equivocating, darken and perplex.

"Know thou, that, from the first, these substances.

Rejoicing in the countenance of God,
Have held unceasingly their view, intent
Upon the glorious vision, from the which
Nought absent is nor hid: where then no change
Of newness, with succession, interrupts,
Remembrance, there needs none to gather up
Divided thought and images remote.

"So that men, thus at variance with the truth, Dream, though their eyes be open; reckless some Of error; others well aware they err, To whom more guilt and shame are justly due.

^{*} Meritorious] The collator of the Monte Casino MS. boasts of that being the only text which has "meritorio," concistorio," and "adjutorio." The reading is probably right, but I find it is in Landino's edition of 1484, and Vellutello's of 1544; and it may, perhaps, be in many others.

Each the known track of sage philosophy Deserts, and has a by-way of his own: 90 So much the restless eagerness to shine, And love of singularity, prevail. Yet this, offensive as it is, provokes Heav'n's anger less, than when the book of God Is fore'd to yield to man's authority, Or from its straightness warp'd: no reek'ning made What blood the sowing of it in the world Has cost; what favour for himself he wins, Who meekly clings to it. The aim of all Is how to shine: e'en they, whose office is 100 To preach the gospel, let the gospel sleep, And pass their own inventions off instead. One tells, how at Christ's suffering the wan moon Bent back her steps, and shadow'd o'er the sun With intervenient disk, as she withdrew: Another, how the light shrouded itself Within its tabernaele, and left dark The Spaniard, and the Indian, with the Jew. Such fables Florence in her pulpit hears, Bandied about more frequent than the names 110 Of Bindi and of Lapi* in her streets. The sheep, meanwhile, poor witless ones, return From pasture, fed with wind: and what avails, For their excuse, they do not see their harm? Christ said not to his first conventicle, Go forth and preach impostures to the world, But gave them truth+ to build on; and the sound Was mighty on their lips: nor needed they, Beside the gospel, other spear or shield,

^{*} Of Bindi and of Lapi.] Common names of men at Florence. † Gave them truth.] "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark xvi. 15.

To aid them in their warfare for the faith. 120 The preacher now provides himself with store Of jests and gibcs; and, so there be no lack Of laughter, while he vents them, his big cowl Distends, and he has won the meed he sought: Could but the vulgar catch a glimpse the while Of that dark bird which nestles in his hood. They scarce would wait to hear the blessing said, Which now the dotards hold in such esteem. That every counterfeit, who spreads abroad The hands of holy promise, finds a throng 130 Of credulous fools beneath. Saint Anthony Fattens with this his swinc,* and others worse Than swinc, who diet at his lazy board, Paying with unstamp'd metalt for their fare.

"But (for we far have wander'd) let us seek
The forward path again; so as the way
Be shorten'd with the time. No mortal tongue,
Nor thought of man, hath ever reach'd so far,
That of these natures he might count the tribes.
What Daniel‡ of their thousands hath reveal'd, 140
With finite number, infinite conceals. [beams,
The fountain, at whose source these drink their

With light supplies them in as many modes,

* Saint Anthony

Fattens with this his swine. On the sale of these blessings, the brothers of St. Anthony supported themselves and their paramours. From behind the swine of St. Anthony, our Poet levels a blow at the object of his inveterate enmity, Boniface VIII. from whom, "in 1297, they obtained the dignity and privileges of an independent congregation." See Mosheim's Eccles. History, in Dr. Maclaine's Translation, v. ii. cent. xi. p. 2. c. 2. § 28.

† With unstamp'd metal.] With false indulgences.

[‡] Daniel.] "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Daniel vii. 10.

As there are splendours that it shines on: each According to the virtue it conceives, Differing in love and sweet affection.

Look then how lofty and how huge in breadth The' eternal might, which, broken and dispers'd Over such countless mirrors, yet remains Whole in itself and one, as at the first,"



CANTO XXX.

ARGUMENT.

Dante is taken up with Beatrice into the empyrean; and there having his sight strengthened by her aid, and by the virtue derived from looking on a river of light, he sees the triumph of the angels and of the souls of the blessed.

Noon's fervid hour perchance six thousand miles*
From hence is distant; and the shadowy cone
Almost to level on our earth declines;
When, from the midmost of this blue abyss,
By turns some star is to our vision lost.
And straightway as the handmaid of the sun
Puts forth her radiant brow, all, light by light,
Fade; and the spangled firmament shuts in,
E'en to the loveliest of the glittering throng
Thus vanish'd gradually from my sight
The triumph, which plays ever round the point,
That overcame me, seeming (for it did)
Engirt† by that it girdeth. Wherefore love,

† Engirt.] "Appearing to be encompassed by these angelic.

bands, which are in reality encompassed by it."

^{*} Six thousand miles.] He compares the vanishing of the vision to the fading away of the stars at dawn, when it is noon-day six thousand miles off, and the shadow, formed by the earth over the part of it inhabited by the Poet, is about to disappear.

With loss of other object, forc'd me bend Mine eyes on Beatrice once again.

If all, that hitherto is told of her, Were in one praise concluded, 't were too weak To furnish out this turn.* Mine eves did look On beauty, such, as I believe in sooth, Not merely to exceed our human: but. 20 That save it's Maker, none can to the full Enjoy it. At this point o'erpower'd I fail; Unequal to my theme; as never bard Of buskin or of sock hath fail'd before. For as the sun doth to the feeblest sight, E'en so remembrance of that witching smile Hath dispossest my spirit of itself. Not from that day, when on this earth I first Beheld her charms, up to that view of them. Have I with song applausive ever ceas'd 30 To follow: but now follow them no more: My course here bounded, as each artist's is, When it doth touch the limit of his skill.

She, (such as I bequeath her to the bruit Of louder trump than mine, which hasteneth on, Urging it's arduous matter to the close,) Her words resum'd, in gesture and in voice Resembling one accustom'd to command: "Forth† from the last corporeal are we come Into the heav'n that is unbodied light; 40 Light intellectual, replete with love; Love of true happiness, replete with joy:

Hence perhaps Milton, P. L. b. viii, 491.

^{*} This turn.] Questa vice.

This turn hath made amends.

[†] Forth.] From the ninth sphere to the empyrean, which is mere light.

50

Joy, that transcends all sweetness of delight. Here shalt thou look on either mighty host* Of Paradise; and one in that array, Which in the final judgment thou shalt see."

As when the lightning, in a sudden spleen Unfolded, dashes from the blinding eyes The visive spirits, dazzled and bedimm'd; So, round about me, fulminating streams Of living radiance play'd, and left me swath'd And veil'd in dense impenetrable blaze. Such weal is in the love, that stills this heav'n; For it's own flamet the torch thus fitting ever.

No sooner to my list'ning ear had come
The brief assurance, than I understood
New virtue into me infus'd, and sight
Kindled afresh, with vigour to sustain
Excess of light however pure. I look'd;
And, in the likeness of a river, saw
60
Light flowing,‡ from whose amber-seeming waves
Flash'd up effulgence, as they glided on
'Twixt banks, on either side, painted with spring,
Incredible how fair: and, from the tide
There ever and anon, outstarting, flew
Sparkles instinct with life; and in the flow'rs
Did set them, like to rubies chas'd in gold:

^{*} Either mighty host.] Of angels, that remained faithful, and of beatified souls; the latter in that form which they will have at the last day.

[†] For it's own flame.] Thus disposing the spirits to receive it's own heatific light.

[†] Light flowing.] "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. xxii. 1.

Underneath a bright sea flow'd Of jasper or of liquid pearl.

Then, as if drunk with odours, plung'd again Into the wond'rous flood: from which, as one Re-enter'd, still another rose. "The thirst Of knowledge high, whereby thou art inflam'd, To search the meaning of what here thou seest, The more it warms thee, pleases me the more. But first behoves thee of this water drink, Or ere that longing be allay'd." So spake The day-star of mine eyes: then thus subjoin'd: "This stream; and these, forth-issuing from it's gulf And diving back, a living topaz each; With all this laughter on it's bloomy shores; Are but a preface, shadowy of the truth* 80 They emblem: not that, in themselves, the things Are crude; but on thy part is the defect, For that thy views not yet aspire so high."

Never did babe, that had outslept his wont Rush, with such eager straining, to the milk, As I toward the water, bending me,
To make the better mirrors of mine eyes
In the refining wave: and as the caves
Of mine eye-lids† did drink of it, forthwith
Seem'd it unto me turn'd from length to round. 90
Then as a troop of maskers, when they put
Their visors off, look other than before;
The counterfeited semblance thrown aside:
So into greater jubilee were chang'd
Those flowers and sparkles; and distinct I saw
Before me, either court‡ of heav'n display'd.

Shadowy of the truth.] Son di lor vero ombriferi prefazi.

the caves
Of mine eye lids.] Thus Shakespeare calls the eye-lids "penthouse lids." Macbeth, act i. sc. 3.
Either court.] See Note to v. 44.

O prime enlightener! thou who gav'st me strength On the high triumph of thy realm to gaze; Grant virtue now to utter what I kenn'd.

There is in heav'n a light, whose goodly shine 100 Makes the Creator visible to all Created, that in seeing him alone Have peace; and in a circle spreads so far, That the circumf'rence were too loose a zone To girdle in the sun. All is one beam, Reflected from the summit of the first, That moves, which being hence and vigour takes. And as some cliff, that from the bottom eyes Its image mirror'd in the crystal flood, As if to' admire it's brave appareling 110 Of verdure and of flowers; so, round about, Eying the light, on more than million thrones, Stood, eminent, whatever from our earth Has to the skies return'd. How wide the leaves, Extended to their utmost, of this rose, Whose lowest step embosoms such a space Of ample radiance! Yet, nor amplitude Nor height impeded, but my view with ease Took in the full dimensions of that joy. Near or remote, what there avails, where God 120 Immediate rules, and Nature, awed, suspends Her sway? Into the yellow of the rose Perennial, which, in bright expansiveness, Lays forth it's gradual blooming, redolent Of praises to the never-wint'ring sun, As one, who fain would speak yet holds his peace, Beatrice led me; and, "Behold," she said, "This fair assemblage; stoles of snowy white, How numberless. The city where we dwell, Behold how vast; and these our seats so throng'd,

Few now are wanting here. In that proud stall, On which, the crown, already o'er it's state Suspended, holds thine eyes-or e'er thyself Mayst at the wedding sup,—shall rest the soul Of the great Harry,* he who by the world Augustus hail'd, to Italy must come, Before her day be ripe. But ye are sick, And in your tetchy wantonness as blind, As is the bantling, that of hunger dies, And drives away the nurse. Nor may it be, 140 That he, + who in the sacred forum sways, Openly or in secret, shall with him Accordant walk: whom God will not endure I' the' holy office long: but thrust him down To Simon Magus, where Alagna's priest‡ Will sink beneath him: such will be his meed."

^{*} Of the great Harry.] The Emperor Henry VII. who died in 1313. "Henry, Count of Luxemburg, held the imperial power three years, seven months, and eighteen days from his first coronation to his death. He was a man wise, and just, and gracious; brave and intrepid in arms; a man of honour and a good catholic; and although by his lineage he was of no great condition, he was of a magnanimous heart, much feared and held in awe; and if he had lived longer, would have done the greatest things." G. Villani. lib. ix. cap. 1. Compare Dino Compagni. Muratori. Rer. Ital. Script. tom. ix. lib. iii. p. 524.

[†] He.] Pope Clement V. See Canto xxvii. 53, † Alagna's priest.] Pope Boniface VIII. Hell, canto xix. 79

CANTO XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

The Poet expatiates further on the glorious vision described in the last Canto. On looking round for Beatrice, he finds that she has left him, and that an old man is at his side. This proves to be Saint Bernard, who shows him that Beatrice has returned to her throne, and then points out to him the blessedness of the Virgin Mother.

In fashion, as a snow-white rose, lay then Before my view the saintly multitude,*
Which in his own blood Christ espous'd. Meanwhile,
That other host,† that soar aloft to gaze
And celebrate his glory, whom they love,
Hover'd around; and, like a troop of bees,‡
Amid the vernal sweets alighting now,
Now clustering, where their fragrant labour glows,
Flew downward to the mighty flow'r, or rose
From the redundant petals, streaming back
Unto the steadfast dwelling of their joy.
Faces had they of flame, and wings of gold;

† That other host.] The angels.

^{*} The saintly 'multitude.] Human souls, advanced to this state of glory through the mediation of Christ.

[†] Bees.] Compare Homer. Iliad, ii. 87, Virg. Æn. i. 430, and Milton, P. L. b. i. 768.

The rest was whiter than the driven snow;
And, as they flitted down into the flower,
From range to range, fanning their plumy loins,
Whisper'd the peace and ardour, which they won
From that soft winnowing. Shadow none, the vast
Interposition of such numerous flight
Cast, from above, upon the flower, or view
Obstructed aught. For, through the universe, 20
Wherever merited, celestial light
Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents.

All there, who reign in safety and in bliss, Ages long past or new, on one sole mark Their love and vision fix'd. O trinal beam Of individual star, that charmst them thus! Vouchsafe one glance to gild our storm below.*

If the grim brood; from Arctic shores that roam'd, (Where Helice; for ever, as she wheels, Sparkle's a mother's fondness on her son) 30 Stood in mute wonder 'mid the works of Rome, When to their view the Lateran aroses

* To gild our storm below.] To guide us through the dangers to which we are exposed in this tempestuous life.

+ If the grim brood.] The northern bordes who invaded Rome. Landino justly observes, that "this is a most excellent comparison to show how great his astonishment was at beholding the realms of the blest."

‡ Helice.] Callisto, and her son Arcas, changed into the constellations of the greater Bear and Arctophylax or Bootes. See Ovid. Met. lib. ii. fab. v. vi.

§ The Lateran arose.]

-quando Laterano

Alle cose mortali ando di sopra.

This reminds us of the celebrated passage in Akenside:

Mark how the dread Pantheon stands,

Amid the domes of modern hands,

Ode xviii. b. i.

It is remarkable that Dante has no allusion to the magnificence of Gothic architecture, which was then in so much perfection, and In greatness more than earthly; I, who then From human to divine had pass'd, from time Unto eternity, and out of Florence To justice and to truth, how might I choose But marvel too? 'Twixt gladness and amaze, In sooth no will had I to utter aught, Or hear. And, as a pilgrim, when he rests Within the temple of his vow, looks round 40 In breathless awe, and hopes some time to tell Of all its goodly state; e'en so mine eyes Cours'd up and down along the living light, Now low, and now aloft, and now around, Visiting every step. Looks I beheld, Where charity in soft persuasion sat; Smiles from within, and radiance from above: And, in each gesture, grace and honour high. So rov'd my ken, and in its general form All l'aradise survey'd: when round I turn'd 50 With purpose of my lady to inquire Once more of things that held my thought suspense, But answer found from other than I ween'd; For, Beatrice when I thought to see, I saw instead a senior, at my side, Rob'd, as the rest, in glory. Joy benign Glow'd in his eye, and o'er his cheek diffus'd. With gestures such as spake a father's love.

And, "Whither is she vanish'd?" straight I asked.

"By Beatrice summon'd," he replied,

"I come to aid thy wish. Looking aloft

To the third circle from the highest, there

which, as Tiraboschi endeavours to show, by a passage in Cassiodorus, describing its peculiar character of slender columns and Ianceated arches, was introduced into Italy so early as the end of the fifth century. See Stor. della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. i.

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Behold her on the throne, wherein her merit
Hath plac'd her." Answering not, mine eyes I
rais'd,

And saw her, where aloof she sat, her brow
A wreath reflecting of eternal beams.
Not from the centre of the sea so far
Unto the region of the highest thunder,
As was my ken from her's; and yet the form
Came thro' that medium down, unmix'd and pure.

"O Lady! thou in whom my hopes have rest; 'Who, for my safety, hast not scorn'd in hell To leave the traces of thy footsteps mark'd; For all mine eyes have seen, I, to thy power And goodness, virtue owe and grace. Of slave Thou hast to freedom brought me; and no means, For my deliverance apt, hast left untried. Thy liberal bounty still toward me keep: That, when my spirit, which thou madest whole, Is loosen'd from this body, it may find 80 Favour with thee." So I my suit preferr'd: And she, so distant, as appear'd, look'd down, And smil'd; then towards the eternal fountain turn'd.

And thus the senior, holy and rever'd:

"That thou at length mayst happily conclude
Thy voyage (to which end I was despatch'd,
By supplication mov'd and holy love)
Let thy upsoaring vision range, at large,
This garden through: for so by ray divine
Kindled, thy ken a higher flight shall mount; 90
And from heaven's queen, whom fervent I adore,
All gracious aid befriend us; for that I
Am her own faithful Bernard."* Like a wight

^{*} Bernard.] St. Bernard, the venerable abbot of Clairvaux, and the great promoter of the second crusade, who died A. D. 1153, in his sixty-third year. His sermons are called by Henault,

Who haply from Croatia wends to see
Our Veronica;* and, the while 't is shown,
Hangs over it with never-sated gaze,
And, all that he hath heard revolving, saith
Unto himself in thought: "And didst thou look
E'en thus, O Jesus, my true Lord and God?
And was this semblance thine?" So gaz'd I then 100
Adoring; for the charity of him,†
Who musing, in this world that peace enjoy'd,

"chefs d'œuvres de sentiment et de force." Abrege Chron. de l'Hist. de Fr. 1145. They have even been preferred to all the productions of the ancients, and the author has been termed the last of the fathers of the church. It is uncertain whether they were not delivered originally in the French tongue. Ibid.

That the part he acts in the present poem should be assigned to him, appears somewhat remarkable, when we consider that he severely censured the new festival established in honour of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and "opposed the doctrine itself with the greatest vigour, as it supposed her being honoured with a privilege which belonged to Christ alone." Dr. Maclaine's Mosheim, vol. iii, cent, xii, part ii, c. iii. § 19.

* Our Veronica. 11

A vernicle had he sewed upon his cappe.

Chaucer, Prol. to the Canterbury Tales.

"Vernicle, diminutive of Veronike, Fr. A copy in miniature of the picture of Christ, which is supposed to have been miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief preserved in the church of Saint Peter at Rome. Du Cange in v. Veronica. Madox, Form, Angl. 1, p. 428. Testam, Joh. de Nevill. an. 1386 : Item Domino Archiepiscopo Eborum fratri meo, vestimentum rubeum de velvet cum le verouike (r. Veronike) in granis rosarum de super Brondata (r. broudata.) It was usual for persons returning from pilgrimages, to bring with them certain tokens of the several places which they had visited; and therefore the Pardouer, who is just arrived from Rome, is represented with a vernicle sewed upon his cappe. See Pierce Plowman, 23, b." Tyrwhitt's Glossary to Chaucer. Our Poet alludes to this custom in his Vita Nuova, p. 275. "Avvenne in quel tempo, &c." "It happened, at that time, that many people were going to see that blessed image, which Jesus Christ left to us for a pattern of his most beautiful form, which my lady now beholds in glory."

† Him.] St. Bernard.

Stood livelily before me. "Child of grace!" Thus he began: "thou shalt not knowledge gain Of this glad being, if thine eyes are held Still in this depth below. But search around The circles, to the furthest, till thou spy Seated in state, the queen,* that of this realm Is sov'reign." Straight mine eyes I rais'd; and bright. As, at the birth of morn, the eastern clime Above the' horizon, where the sun declines: So to mine eyes, that upward, as from vale To mountain sped, at the' extreme bound, a part Excell'd in lustre all the front oppos'd And as the glow burns ruddiest o'er the wave. That waits the' ascending tcam, which Phaëton Ill knew to guide, and on each part the light Diminish'd fades, intensest in the midst: So burn'd the pcaceful oriflamb, and slack'd On every side the living flame decay'd. 120 And in that midst their sportive pennons way'd Thousands of angels; in resplendence each Distinct, and quaint adornment. At their glee And carol, smil'd the Lovely One of heav'n, That joy was in the eyes of all the blest.

Had I a tongue in eloquence as rich,
As is the colouring in fancy's loom,
'T were all too poor to utter the least part
Of that enchantment. When he saw mine eyes
Intent on her, that charm'd him; Bernard gaz'd 130
With so exceeding fondness, as infus'd
Ardour into my breast, unfelt before.

^{*} The queen.] 'The Virgin Mary.

CANTO XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

Saint Bernard shows him, on their several thrones, the other blessed souls, both of the old and new Testament; explains to him that their places are assigned them by grace, and not according to merit; and lastly, tells him that if he would obtain power to descry what remained of the heavenly vision, he must unite with him in supplication to Mary.

FREELY the sage, though wrapt in musings high, Assum'd the teacher's part, and mild began: "The wound, that Mary clos'd, she* open'd first, Who sits so beautiful at Mary's feet. The third in order, underneath her, lo! Rachel with Beatrice: Sarah next: Judith; Rebecca; and the gleaner-maid, Meek ancestresst of him, who sang the songs Of sore repentance in his sorrowful mood. All, as I name them, down from leaf to leaf, 10 Are, in gradation, throned on the rose. And from the seventh step, successively, Adown the breathing tresses of the flow'r, Still doth the file of Hebrew dames proceed. For these are a partition wall, whereby

* She.] Eve.

[†] Ancestress.] Ruth, the ancestress of David.

The sacred stairs are sever'd, as the faith In Christ divides them. On this part, where blooms Each leaf in full maturity, are set Such as in Christ, or e'er he came, believ'd. On the' other, where an intersected space 2n Yet shows the semicircle void, abide All they, who look'd to Christ already come. And as our Lady on her glorious stool, And they who on their stools beneath her sit, This way distinction make; e'en so on his, The mighty Baptist that way marks the line. (He who endur'd the desert, and the pains Of martyrdom, and, for two years,* of hell, Yet still continued holy) and beneath, Augustin: + Francis: + Benedict: \ and the rest. Thus far from round to round. So heav'ns decree Forecasts, this garden equally to fill, With faith in either view, past or to come. Learn too, that downward from the step, which cleaves.

Midway, the twain compartments, none there are Who place obtain for merit of their own, But have through others' merit been advanc'd, On set conditions; spirits all releas'd, Ere for themselves they had the power to choose. And, if thou mark and listen to them well, 40 Their childish looks and voice declare as much.

"Here, silent as thou art, I know thy doubt; And gladly will I loose the knot, wherein

^{*} Two years.] The time that elapsed between the death of the Baptist and his redemption by the death of Christ.

[†] Augustin.] Bishop of Hippo, in the fourth century; the celebrated writer who has been mentioned before, Canto S. 117.

[‡] Francis.] See Canto xi.

[§] Benedict.] See Canto xxii.

Thy subtil thoughts have bound thee. From this realm

Excluded, chance no entrance here may find; No more than hunger, thirst, or sorrow ean. A law immutable hath stablish'd all: Nor is there aught thou seest, that doth not fit, Exactly, as the finger to the ring. It is not, therefore, without cause, that these, O'erspeedy comers to immortal life, Are different in their shares of excellence. Our Sov'reign Lord, that settleth this estate In love and in delight so absolute, That wish ean dare no further, every soul, Created in his joyous sight to dwell. With grace, at pleasure, variously endows. And for a proof the' effect may well suffice. And 't is moreover most expressly mark'd In holy scripture,* where the twins are said 60 To' have struggled in the womb. Therefore, as Inweaves the coronet, so every brow fgraee Weareth it's proper hue of orient light. And merely in respect to his prime gift, Not in reward of meritorious deed. Hath each his several degree assign'd. In early times with their own innocence More was not wanting, than the parents' faith, To same them: those first ages past, behov'd That eireumeision in the males should imp 70

^{*} In holy scripture.] "And the children struggled together within her." Gen. xxv. 22. "When Rebekah also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the promise of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." Rom. ix. 10, 11, 12.

The flight of innocent wings: but since the day Of grace hath come, without baptismal rites. In Christ accomplish'd, innocence herself Must linger yet below. Now raise thy view Unto the visage most resembling Christ: For, in her splendour only, shalt thou win The power to look on him." Forthwith I saw Such floods of gladness on her visage shower'd, From holy spirits, winging that profound: That, whatsoever I had yet beheld, 80 Had not so much suspended me with wonder. Or shown me such similitude of God. And he, who had to her descended, once, On earth, now hail'd in heav'n; and on pois'd wing. " Ave, Maria, Gratia Plena, sang. To whose sweet anthem all the blissful court. From all parts answ'ring, rang: that holier joy Brooded the deep serene. "Father rever'd! Who deign'st, for me, to quit the pleasant place. Wherein thou sittest, by eternal lot; 90 Say, who that angel is, that with such glee Beholds our queen, and so enamour'd glows Of her high beauty, that all fire he seems."

So I again resorted to the lore
Of my wise teacher, he, whom Mary's charms
Embellish'd, as the sun the morning star;
Who thus in answer spake: "In him are summ'd,
Whate'er of buxomness and free delight
May be in spirit, or in angel, met:
And so beseems: for that he bare the palm
Down unto Mary, when the Son of God
Vouchsaf'd to clothe him in terrestrial weeds.
Now let thine eyes wait heedful on my words;
And note thou of this just and pious realm

The chiefest nobles. Those, highest in bliss, The twain, on each hand next our empress thron'd, Are as it were two roots unto this rose: He to the left, the parent, whose rash taste Proves bitter to his seed; and, on the right, That ancient father of the holy church, 110 Into whose keeping Christ did give the keys Of this sweet flow'r; near whom behold the seer. That, ere he died, saw all the grievous times Of the fair bride, who with the lance and nails Was won. And, near unto the other, rests The leader, under whom, on manna, fed The' ungrateful nation, fickle and perverse. On the' other part, facing to Peter, lo! Where Anna sits, so well content to look On her lov'd daughter, that with moveless eve 120 She chants the loud hosanna: while, oppos'd To the first father of your mortal kind, Is Lucia,* at whose hest thy lady sped, When on the edge of ruin clos'd thine eye.

"But (for the vision hasteneth to an end)
Here break we off, as the good workman doth,
That shapes the cloak according to the cloth;
And to the primal love our ken shall rise;
That thou mayst penetrate the brightness, far
As sight can bear thee. Yet, alas! in sooth
Beating thy pennous, thinking to advance,
Thou backward fall'st. Grace then must first be

gain'd; [prayer
Her grace, whose might can help thee. Thou in
Seek her: and, with affection, whilst I sue,
Attend, and yield me all thy heart." He said;
And thus the saintly orison began.

^{*} Lucia.] See Hell, canto ii. 97.



CANTO XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

Saint Bernard supplicates the Virgin Mary that Dante may have grace given him to contemplate the brightness of the Divine Majesty, which is accordingly granted; and Dante then himself prays to God for ability to show forth some part of the celestial glory in his writings. Lastly, he is admitted to a glimpse of the great mystery; the Trinity, and the Union of Man with God.

"O VIRGIN mother, daughter of thy Son! Created beings all in lowliness Surpassing, as in height above them all; Term by the' eternal counsel pre-ordain'd: Ennobler of thy nature, so advanc'd In thee, that it's great Maker did not scorn, Himself, in his own work enclos'd to dwell: For in thy womb rekindling shone the love Reveal'd, whose genial influence makes now This flower to germin in eternal peace: Here thou to us, of charity and love, Art, as the noon-day torch; and art, beneath, To mortal men, of hope a living spring. So mighty art thou, lady, and so great, That he, who grace desireth, and comes not To thee for aidance, fain would have desire

10

Fly without wings. Nor only him, who asks, Thy bounty succours; but doth freely oft Forerun the asking. Whatsoe'er may be Of excellence in creature, pity mild, 20 Relenting mercy, large munificence, Are all combin'd in thee. Here knceleth one. Who of all spirits hath review'd the state, From the world's lowest gap unto this height. Suppliant to thee he kneels, imploring grace For virtue yet more high, to lift his ken Toward the bliss supreme. And I, who ne'er Coveted sight, more fondly, for myself, Than now for him, my prayers to thee prefer, (And pray they be not scant) that thou wouldst drive Each cloud of his mortality away; That on the sov'reign pleasure he may gaze. This also I entreat of thee, O queen! Who canst do what thou wilt; that in him thou Wouldst, after all he hath beheld; preserve Affection sound, and human passions quell. Lo! where, with Beatrice, many a saint suit." Stretch their clasp'd hands, in furtherance of my

The eyes, that heav'n with love and awe regards. Fix'd on the suitor, witness'd, how benign She looks on pious pray'rs: then fasten'd they On the' everlasting light, wherein no eye Of creature, as may well be thought, so far Can travel inward. I, meanwhile, who drew Near to the limit, where all wishes end, The ardour of my wish (for so behov'd) Ended within me. Beck'ning smil'd the sage, That I should look aloft: but, ere he bade, Already of myself aloft I look'd; For visual strength, refining more and more, 50

Bare me into the ray authentical
Of sov'reign light. Thenceforward what I saw,
Was not for words to speak, nor memory's self
To stand against such outrage on her skill.

As one, who from a dream awaken'd, straight, All he hath seen forgets; yet still retains Impression of the feeling in his dream; E'en such am I: for all the vision dies. As 't were, away; and yet the sense of sweet, That sprang from it, still trickles in my heart. Thus in the sun-thaw is the snow unseal'd; Thus in the winds on flitting leaves was lost The Sybil's sentence.* O eternal beam! (Whose height what reach of mortal thought may Yield me again some little particle Of what thou then appearedst; give my tongue Power, but to leave one sparkle of thy glory, Unto the race to come, that shall not lose Thy triumph wholly, if thou waken aught Of memory in me, and endure to hear 70 The record sound in this unequal strain.

Such keenness from the living ray I met,
That, if mine eyes had turn'd away, methinks,
I had been lost; but, so embolden'd, on
I pass'd, as I remember, till my view
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.

O grace, unenvying of thy boon! that gav'st Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken On the' everlasting splendow, that I look'd, While sight was unconsumed; and, in that depth, Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er

^{*} The Sybil's sentence.] Virg. Æn. iü. 445.

The universe unfolds; all properties
Of substance and of accident, beheld,
Compounded, yet one individual light
The whole. And of such bond methinks I saw
The universal form; for that whene'er
I do but speak of it, my soul dilates
Beyond her proper self; and, till I speak,
One moment* seems a longer lethargy,
Than five-and-twenty ages had appear'd
To that emprize, that first made Neptune wonder
At Argo's shadow† darkening on his flood.

With fixed heed, suspense and motionless,
Wond'ring I gaz'd; and admiration still
Was kindled, as I gaz'd. It may not be,
That one, who looks upon that light, can turn
To other object, willingly, his view.
For all the good, that will may covet, there
Is summ'd; and all, elsewhere defective found,
Complete. My tongue shall utter now, no more 100
E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the
That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast. [babe's
Not that the semblance of the living light.

^{*} One moment.] "A moment seems to me more tedious, than five-and-twenty ages would have appeared to the Argonauts, when they had resolved on their expedition." Lombardi proposes a new interpretation of this difficult passage, and would understand our author to say that "one moment elapsed after the vision, occasioned a greater forgetfulness of what he had seen, than the five-and-twenty centuries, which passed between the Argonautic expedition and the time of his writing this poem, had caused oblivion of the circumstances attendant on that event."

⁺ Argo's shadow.]

The wondred Argo, which in wondrous piece First through the Euxine seas bore all the flower of Greece. Spencer, Faery Queen, b. ii. c. 12. st. 44.

Was chang'd (that ever as at first remain'd,) But that my vision quickening, in that sole Appearance, still new miracles descry'd, And toil'd me with the change. In that abyss Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd, methought, Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound:* And, from another, one reflected seem'd, 110 As rainbow is from rainbow: and the third Seem'd fire, breath'd equally from both. O speech! How feeble and how faint art thou, to give Conception birth. Yet this to what I saw Is less than little. O eternal light! Solc in thyself that dwellst; and of thyself Sole understood, past, present, or to come; Thou smiledst, t on that circling, t which in thee Seem'd as reflected splendour, while I mus'd; For I therein, methought, in it's own hue 120 Beheld our image painted: steadfastly I therefore por'd upon the view. As one, Who vers'd in geometric lore, would fain Measure the circle; and, though pondering long And deeply, that beginning, which he needs, Finds not: e'en such was I, intent to scan The novel wonder, and trace out the form, How to the circle fitted, and therein How plac'd: but the flight was not for my wing;

^{*} Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound.] The Trinity.

⁺ Thou smiledst.] Some MSS. and editions instead of "intendente te a me arridi," have "intendente te ami ed arridi," who, understanding thyself, lovest and enjoyest thyself" which, Lombardi thinks much preferable.

[‡] That circling.] The second of the circles, "Light of Light," in which he dimly beheld the mystery of the incarnation.

Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.

Here vigour fail'd the tow'ring fantasy: But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel In even motion, by the Love impell'd, That moves the sun in heav'n and all the stars.

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